

Implementing Maternity Health Justice Partnerships

Network for Justice: Insights and Learning Session
Tuesday 25 April 2023

Laura Arrowsmith
Health Justice Partnerships Manager
Maternity Action
lauraarrowsmith@maternityaction.org.uk

About Maternity Action

- UK's maternity rights charity dedicated to promoting, protecting and enhancing the rights of all pregnant women, new mothers and their families to employment, social security and health care
- We run a number of specialist advice services and provide comprehensive online information about maternity rights
- Research, policy and campaigning

Our advice services

- **Maternity Rights Advice Service** – employment, social security
- **Employment Casework Service** – casework and peer support for more complex cases
- **The Maternity Care Access Advice Service** – women affected by NHS charging
- **The Migrant Women's Rights Service** – training and resources for midwives and voluntary sector workers

Maternity Rights Advice Service

Women and families can contact us for advice on:

- Employment rights in pregnancy
- Maternity pay & benefits
- Maternity leave
- Flexible working
- Health and safety issues
- Redundancy
- Discrimination & dismissal
- Breastfeeding rights

The service is run by our in-house Solicitors

Pregnant & worried about money?

Maternity Action can help.

We can check you're getting all the support you are entitled to.

Contact Maternity Action for completely FREE and confidential legal advice on work and benefits for pregnant women and new parents.

Call 0808 802 0062 (freephone)

10am - 1pm Monday - Friday

Or complete the online form:

maternityaction.org.uk/wirral-maternity-rights



NHS
Wirral University
Teaching Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

MA
maternity action
Ten years of fighting for better maternity rights.

Our HJP work so far

Initial
scoping
project

Pilot project
Wirral
maternity
service

Greater
Manchester
& East
Cheshire
project

The Legal Education
Foundation

Cheshire and
Merseyside Women's
Health and Maternity
Programme

DHSC Health and
Wellbeing Fund

HJP scoping project

- **Service model development** – planning for partnerships with maternity services
- **Evaluation** – measures for service users and maternity service providers
- **Policy influencing** – raising awareness of health justice partnership service models with policy makers and other stakeholders including commissioners
- Overall aim was funding for a maternity HJP pilot project

Objectives of maternity HJPs

We spoke with a number of commissioners about our work and how a maternity HJP would:

- Make it easier for women and families to access advice
- Save midwifery time
- Support objectives in the NHS Equity and Equality guidance by enabling the midwifery team to help women with wider social issues that impact on health and wellbeing in pregnancy

Wirral HJP service

- Working with Cheshire and Merseyside Women's Health and Maternity Programme
- Establishing maternity health justice partnership with Wirral Women and Children's Hospital
- Dedicated Maternity Rights Advice Service for women/families using the maternity service
- Midwives can refer directly to Maternity Action, saving time for stretched teams
- Early evaluation data shows access to service reduces stress, increases confidence and resolves work issues / increase income

Partnership working in the Wirral

- Service launch on ITV news: <https://www.itv.com/news/2022-06-08/new-and-expectant-mothers-given-free-legal-and-financial-advice-in-trial>

“Its really good to have somewhere specific to refer to, dedicated to maternity advice... We can't be expert in everything and don't know the ins and outs of the legalities around maternity rights”.

“Thank you so much for your help, it's helped me understand what I can do around my health and safety concerns.”

New and expectant mothers given free legal and financial advice in ground-breaking trial

WORLD | PREGNANCY | NHS | ⌚ Wednesday 8 June 2022 at 9:58pm



Sarah Corker

Social Affairs Correspondent



Wirral key learning

- Point of contact to champion project is key
- Need to be flexible and adapt ways of working in partnership including creative approaches to engagement / use of time
- Health practitioner understanding of legal issues
- Time taken to embed new ways of working
- Importance of on the ground presence and service visibility

DHSC Manchester project

- Funding from DHSC Health and Wellbeing Fund on the theme of women's reproductive wellbeing in the workplace
- Project will deliver a dedicated Greater Manchester and East Cheshire Maternity Rights Advice Service, working in partnership with maternity services across the region
- Development of HJP model including prompt question to more consistently embed the service into maternity pathway
- Project also partners with GM Law Centre and supports strand of work with employers
- External evaluation with NCVO

Reflections & challenges

- Language of 'Health Justice Partnership' – does this resonate?
- How do we fit in with Social Prescribing agenda?
- Access to funding & short-term funding models
- Demonstrating direct health benefits of advice
- Who to influence next? Navigating the complexities of health system and finding the right people to engage with

Opportunities

- HJPs are a practical solution to address social determinants that underpin health inequalities
- Our service helps women to retain their jobs, reduce stress, resolve problems at work and access maternity pay and benefits
- Fits with objectives in NHS Equity and Equality Guidance for Local Maternity Systems to address social determinants of health and wider health system objectives to tackle inequalities

Further resources

Please see our website or contact us for further details on our project including briefing materials on:

[Health justice partnerships and the wider determinants of health](#)

[Health justice partnerships and the benefits for maternity services](#)

[Evaluating health justice partnerships](#)

maternityaction.org.uk