



**We support  
twins, triplets  
and more...**

**News release**

**Wednesday April 21**

## **Twins Trust welcomes first ever multiple births midwife ‘job description’**

Twins Trust has welcomed a new standard for nursing and midwifery staff in caring for women expecting twins, triplets or more which has been published by The Royal College of Nursing (RCN).

Multiple pregnancies have a higher risk of complications for mothers and babies, some being more complex than others, for example triplets and higher order pregnancies, monochorionic pregnancies (sharing a placenta) and pregnancies to mothers with other health conditions.

The role of the Multiple Births Midwife (MBM) is to co-ordinate continuity of care and support for women (their partners and families) with a multiple pregnancy.

Not every Hospital Trust has a MBM so the process to recruit should now be smoother as this standard provides clear direction for heads of midwifery when creating roles to support best practice in caring for mums pregnant with twins or more.

**Multiple births specialist midwife Pam Langford**, who works at East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust and with Twins Trust, says this guidance is just what is needed as it clearly sets out what the role involves as well as how to maintain skills and keep them updated. It is also intended to provide a pathway for career enhancement through specialist practice and advanced level practice.

“I am thrilled that we finally have this standard as it will encourage trusts to recruit a multiple birth midwife who is essential to the co-ordination of a successful multiple pregnancy.

“So often families expecting twins, triplets or more have many questions and need different care to those having singletons.

“Having a MBM gives women and their families the opportunity to have much longer consultations to discuss birth planning, anxieties and parenting preparation.”

The NICE Guidelines (NG137 and QS46) recommend that all women with a multiple pregnancy are cared for by a nominated multidisciplinary team consisting of specialist obstetricians, midwives and sonographers.

And it is critical to have a co-ordinator to ensure continuity of care a role ideally suited to a multiple births midwife.

**Jane Gorringe, Maternity Engagement Project Manager at Twins Trust**, said: “If more NHS Trusts employ multiple births midwives, follow the NICE multiple birth guidance, call on Twins Trust for CPD and access our Maternity Engagement quality improvement programme, it should lead to improved outcomes for mothers and babies.

“And as we know, this is badly needed as the [MBRRACE Perinatal Confidential Enquiry](#) into stillbirths and neonatal baby deaths in twin pregnancies showed twins are twice as likely to be stillborn, and are 4.3 times more likely to die as newborns compared with babies in pregnancies with one baby.

“Clinical experts in multiple pregnancy looked at a random sample of UK-wide twin pregnancies which sadly involved at least one fetal loss, stillbirth or neonatal death.

“They found 54% of deaths may have been preventable with better care.”

**Carmel Bagness, RCN Professional Lead Midwifery & Women’s Health**, said:

“Multiple births midwives may have different responsibilities depending on the maternity unit where they work and the level of neonatal care available. The skills needed, however, remain the same.

“This new publication is intended to be a best practice guide to the skills and knowledge needed to be a specialist midwife caring for women, their partners and families with a multiple pregnancy/birth. It can also be used as reminder to help those already in such roles to keep up to date.”

#### Notes to Journalists

For further information on multiple births please contact Alyson Chorley [alysonchorley@twinstrust.org](mailto:alysonchorley@twinstrust.org) or [pressoffice@twinstrust.org](mailto:pressoffice@twinstrust.org) call 01252 332344 / 07791 383494.

Please get in touch if you would like to read the full guidance.

Twins Trust is the only UK-wide charity dedicated to improving the lives and wellbeing of families with twins, triplets or more. Representing 20,000 members and 100 local clubs in the UK, Twins Trust provides help and support to both parents and professionals to meet the unique challenges faced by multiple birth families. We invest in research to save lives, change lives and create better futures for multiple birth families. We also run a unique quality improvement project at Maternity Units to encourage and help with adherence to NICE QS46.

For further information, please visit [www.twinstrust.org](http://www.twinstrust.org)

1. Follow us on: Twitter/Facebook/Insta @twinstrust
2. For confidential and emotional support for families with multiples, please call Twinline which is staffed by trained volunteers that are parents of multiples and can offer support on sleeping, feeding, crying, behaviour, discipline, school issues or special needs. It is

free to call on 0800 138 0509 and is open Monday to Friday from 10am–1pm and from 7pm–10pm.

View the MBRRACE Perinatal Confidential Enquiry here.

<https://www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/mbrance-uk/reports>

The [MBRRACE-UK Perinatal Mortality Surveillance Report](#) for births in 2018 (published December 2020) shows that neonatal deaths for twins has increased from 5.45 (per 1,000 births) in 2017 to 6.38 in 2018.

The gap has widened between singletons and multiples with twins now 1.7 times more likely to result in stillbirth (up from 1.5) and 4.3 times more likely to result in neonatal death (up from 3 times).

The MBRRACE findings mirror the latest [ONS figures](#) (for England and Wales) released in November 2020.

- The number of multiple births in 2019 dropped to the lowest since 2005 to 9,656 maternities (10,005 in 2018)
- However, the stillbirth number has increased from 131 stillbirths in 2018 to 150 in 2019.