

# **The Working Lives of Midwives**

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*The Royal College of*  
**Midwives**

# Factors that Affect the Working Lives of Midwives

## Demographics

Gender

Age

Ethnicity

## Composition/Banding

Numbers of Midwives

Pay

Hours

Workload

Morale

## How can this be improved?

# Gender

Women constitute over 99% of the profession

# Age

Year to end 31 March	% less than 40 years old
2005	31.59
2004	34.34
2003	Not Available
2002	44.12
2001	47.33
2000	50.03
1999	53.62
1998	55.70
1997	57.16
1996	58.63
1995	59.58

Age Range	Practising midwives	Effective register
<25	1.39%	1.94%
25-29	6.15%	8.29%
30-39	24.05%	27.35%
40-49	42.61%	34.42%
50-54	12.59%	11.91%
>55	13.21%	16.09%

# Ethnicity

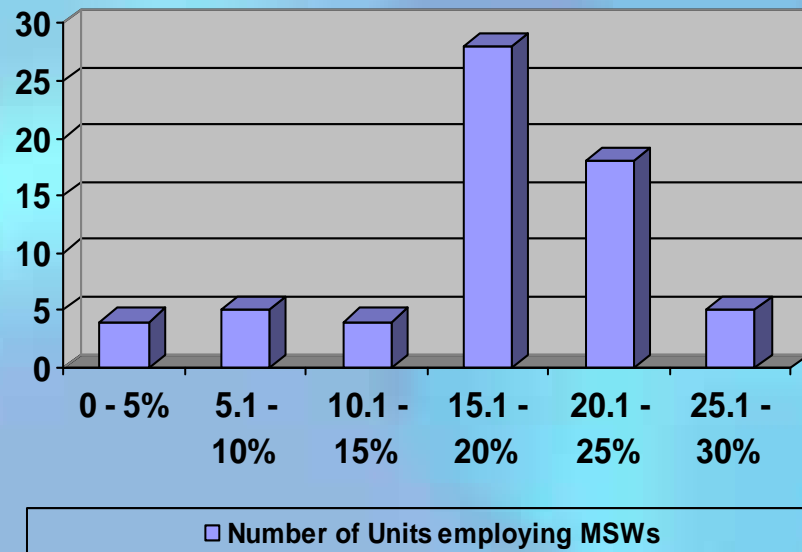
National Census figures, DH data and RCM membership figures suggest the following;

- White people are under represented in the NHS, forming 93.3% of the UK population yet only 76% of the NHS and midwifery populations.
- The Black population, which forms 2% of the UK population, represents 4.2% of the NHS population and 7% of the midwifery population
- The Asian community represent 3.2% of the UK Population but just 1.5% of the profession.
- Those referring to themselves as Chinese are also over represented in the midwifery community by a factor of almost 3 to 1.

# Workforce

MSWs, 16.7%; Band 5, 6.2%; Band 6, 54.4%; Band 7, 20%;  
Band 8, 2.7%.

MSW's are now firmly established as part of the maternity workforce which  
now, on average comprises of:



# The number of midwives

## The number of Headcount and WTE Midwives (England)

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Headcount	22,841	22,799	22,572	23,075	23,249	23,941	24,844	24,808	24,469	25,093	25,664
Whole Time Equivalent	18,166	17,876	17,662	18,048	18,119	18,444	18,854	18,949	18,862	19,298	19,639

These figures display

- a 12.4% increase in the headcount number of midwives
- an 8.1% increase in WTE midwives over the last 10 years.

Birthrate plus suggests that a birthrate of 673,061 (England 2008) requires 24,937.5 WTE midwives whereas there are currently just 19,639. This represents a shortage of 5,298.5 WTE midwives.

# Pay

Newly qualified midwives commence employment on Band 5 (£20,710 p.a.) and after 1 year automatically (subject to competencies) move to Band 6 (£24,831 to £33,436 in 9 increments).

Managers, Team Leaders and others may be promoted to Band 7 (£29,789 to £39,273 in 9 increments)

Heads of Midwifery and some other senior staff may be employed in Bands 8a, 8b, 8c or 8d. 2 Consultant midwives are employed in Band 9.

Most midwives also receive Unsocial Hours and On-Call payments

The NHS also operates a final salary pension scheme and offers reasonable annual leave and sickness entitlements



# Hours

NHS contracts stipulate 37.5 hrs per week. RCM survey suggests 47% of midwives work part time (27.5% in NHS) and that 37% would like to work fewer hours.

65% of midwives work over and above their contractual hours (only 14.7% are paid for these excess hours). On average they work between 2 and 6 hours per week excess either by not taking scheduled breaks or by continuing to work beyond their finishing time

# Workload

87% of midwives say their workload has increased in the last 12 months mainly due to

- Extra Responsibilities
- Insufficient Staff Cover
- Bed Shortages
- Recruitment Problems

And this has resulted in

- A detrimental impact on relationships (inside and outside work)
- A negative impact on patient care
- A detrimental impact on your health

# Morale & Motivation

## Would you recommend midwifery as a career in the NHS

Yes	35.3%
No	59.8 %
Unsure	4.9%

## How Seriously have you considered leaving your current position in the NHS

Not at all/Not very seriously	40.5%
Fairly/Very Seriously	59.5%

## Reasons for Wanting to leave

- Stress
- Workload
- Compromise standards of care
- Undervalued
- Restructuring
- Staff Shortages
- Working Hours
- Lack of Family Friendly Policies

## Reasons for Wanting to Stay

- Still committed to the job
- I feel I am doing something worthwhile
- I enjoy my job
- NHS Pension Scheme

## Other Factors Affecting Morale

- Training
- Verbal/Physical Abuse/Bullying & Harassment

# How can this be improved (1)?

- Flexible Retirement Policies
- Training & Development/CPD
- Staff Involvement
- Partnership Working
- Childcare Provision
- Flexible Careers
- Family Friendly Policies
- Health & Safety Policies
- Stress at Work Policies
- IWL
- Other

Staff Appreciation Days  
Team Building

# How can this be improved (2)?

Social Events

Benefit Scheme i.e. free swimming, subsidised gym

Staff support including free counselling

Direct access to physiotherapy services

1 week mandatory training

Staff secondment to development opportunities

Excellence Awards

Focus groups

Recognition and Remuneration of Supervisor of Midwives

Time out sessions

Patient Experience Workshops

Conflict resolution training

Leadership Development

Succession planning

## **And Finally**

Government Policy

The Rising Birthrate

Women's Expectations

NHS finances

Improved Midwife Birth Ratio's

Mandatory Staffing Levels

# The Working Lives of Midwives

## IT'S YOUR TURN!

What other issues affect your working life?

# The Working Lives of Midwives

Thanks for listening