

# Maternity Matters: Identifying the needs of women in Camden to meet national policies

Presentation to:  
RCM annual conference  
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# Structure of talk

- About Options UK
- Our brief for Camden Local NHS
- Approach/methods
- Findings: choice of place of birth
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# About Options UK

- UK arm of Options Consultancy Services Ltd
- Works with service providers, commissioners and policy-makers in health and social services:
  - Technical assistance
  - Consultancy services
  - Management services
- Particular expertise in maternal health programmes

# Our brief for Camden Local NHS

- Maternity Health Needs Assessment
- Gain detailed understanding of maternity service provided to women/their partners
- Compare with/contrast against Maternity Matters
- Ensure harder-to-reach groups were included
- Identify issues, not solutions – these need local ownership

# Approach / methods

- Literature review: filling in the gaps, not re-inventing the wheel
- Demographic profiling
- Service mapping
- Protocols / written information evaluation
- Interviews with service users, key informants, service providers
- (Statistical analysis of hospital data)

# Choice of place of birth: Maternity Matters

“Depending on their circumstances, women and their partners will be able to choose where they wish to give birth ...

The options ... are:

Birth ... at home

Birth ... at a local midwifery facility

Birth ... in a hospital”

# Choice of place of birth: assessing the local situation

- Are all three options available?
- What written/verbal information/messages are given out and by whom?
- When are women expected to decide?
- How do providers at all levels feel about home birth?
- How is pregnancy risk-assessed?
- Ask women what happened, not just whether they had a choice (“I had a choice. The doctor said the hospitals they expected people to go to were X or Y”)

# Choice of place of birth: opportunities identified

- Joint clinics/home birth service
- Independent midwives
- Learning from other trusts
- Potential for saving money after initial investment



# Choice of place of birth: challenges identified

- Perception that hospital is always safest
- Home birth is rare so difficult for all midwives to become expert
- Increasing 'choice' for high-risk women (e.g. environment in labour ward)

# For further information, contact:

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