

## Devon Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP Vice Chair)

### Election statement

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| Name | Katy Quick |
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#### What skills, knowledge and experience do you have for the role of MVP chair.

I am a mother of two girls birthed in Bristol and most recently North Devon, my oldest Ellie is nearly 3 and my youngest Juniper is 6 weeks. I had two very different births, both relatively complicated, and both experiences involved in-depth communication with various maternity service providers and gave me insight into those services. Becoming a mother, raising and learning with my children has ignited a passion in me for pre and postnatal health. I am currently studying a foundation degree in holistic sleep coaching with a view to helping families with sleep and mental health alongside working part time as a Marriage Registrar for the council. The Vice Chair role feels like a way to deeply engage with local maternity provision and service users in a positive and progressive way and I have been searching for a route into this sort of work.

I am an experienced coach, mentor and teacher with a proven track record of organising and delivering engaging events and courses and providing high levels of professional and emotional support. I am articulate, a natural presenter and communicator. My previous work as a classroom Science teacher and then Student Advisor for The Dyson Institute means I am able to engage with clarity and warmth even during times of heightened stress.

During my time at Dyson I worked as a member of a small team to co-create the overall student support experience at the Dyson Institute as well as supporting individual students with their mental health. I researched, processed and used large amounts of guidance, legislation and student feedback in order to ensure our university systems were evidence-based and student-led. I developed relationships between the Dyson Institute and the rest of the Dyson workforce and staff groups such as the LGBTQ+ PROUD and SheWorks. I also represented the Dyson Institute leadership team in various external events and meetings with organisations including Mind, Student Mind and Warwick University. I will be able to bring this breadth of experience to the Vice Chair position.

My Social Sciences degree gave me a broad foundation in a variety of data gathering and processing skills, and I have the ability to process a large amount of written information very quickly; making it quick for me to become a valuable member of any team I am working within. I am experienced in using data recording and handling systems such as SIMS and booking systems including Outlook and have learned new methods of operating quickly and efficiently during my time across different organisations.

With high levels of emotional intelligence I am an excellent listener and I am able to adapt quickly to the individual needs of people around me, ensuring they are engaged and supported. My colleagues have described me as positive, collected and kind; I am punctual, well presented and would be confident taking on the responsibilities of the Vice Chair role.

## What you would hope to achieve as MVP Vice-chair

I plan to approach the Vice Chair role with an open mind as I am excited to continue learning about maternity services and the process of birth itself. I would love to be able to say that I was a part of refocusing services on service users and their families so every user felt heard and empowered throughout their engagement with maternity services.

I have areas of interest to me based on my own experiences and those of women close to me. Having experienced baby loss I am keen to explore provision for service users experiencing a miscarriage, still birth or receiving potentially difficult news about a pregnancy. I hope to achieve an environment in which they are treated with love, compassion and enabled to retain dignity. I hope to use service user feedback to ensure advisory literature is supportive and realistic and also to inform medical professionals on how best to communicate.

Similarly, I hope to use feedback to create resources intended to inform simply and concisely about making choices and advocating for those choices during pregnancy, particularly choices around birth location and interventions.

I hope to build on existing strategies to increase representation of groups of service users including Black service users, users of various ethnic minorities and LGBTQ+ service users. Representation alone is not enough, I also hope to be part of conversations, real feedback and positive action around the safety of these groups of service users in order to improve outcomes for them and their families.

I would like to explore the continuity of care model currently in place in North Devon and to gather feedback from both service users and midwives about its effectiveness. This feedback can be used to ensure that everyone involved has the chance to develop relationships and feel supported as was the intention behind the model.

Coming into the role as COVID-19 restrictions are lifting, I hope to be a part of co-creating a visitors policy that enables service users to feel continuously supported during their time in hospital. I will advocate for this to be based on service user feedback in order to meet a range of needs including families with existing children.

I found breastfeeding initially much harder than I expected, but as an extended breastfeeder I am also greatly aware of its benefits. I would like to provide realistic and detailed advice and guidance to expecting parents so they are fully aware of what breastfeeding may be like. I would also like to gather feedback around support given at the hospital to ensure it is cohesive, as many women stop before they are ready and regret doing so.

Finally, trauma around the birthing experience of service users is of particular interest to me and how it affects postpartum physical and mental health. I would like to explore factors that impact birth trauma and implement changes that aim to lessen these factors. Conversely, I hope to explore what makes service users feel successful and empowered and share this widely as something to be celebrated.