

Devon Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP) Vice Chair Candidate Statements.

Candidate 1: Standing for

North Devon (North Devon Trust area)	East Devon (RD&E Trust area)	South Devon (Torbay and South Devon Trust area)	West Devon (UHP Trust area)
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Name	Abigail Beach
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<p>What skills, knowledge and experience do you have for the role of MVP Vice Chair.</p> <p>In recent years as a Mother of six children aging from 3 to 12, I have experienced a variety of different trials and tribulations. As I go along I continue to develop skills to use within my home life and my work life. Determination and Perseverance and Patience to name a few. I took part in a Communication Skills development workshop recently of which there are two further parts to attend, Reflective listening and Conscious/gentle communication were some things which we covered and which I practise using on a daily basis. Prioritising, planning and Crisis Management are things which I have also taught myself during Motherhood, coming from a calm grounded position before deciding what to do next.</p> <p>Negotiation and project management are also especially valuable . I hold a Pregnancy Support Meeting at a local library,keeping a positive space where Pregnant Women come together to find support and meet other pregnant women and new mother.They have the opportunity to talk about their experiences, hopes and dreams. Currently this is running via zoom although fortunately more regularly. Reaching people all over the world.</p> <p>I recently prepared a presentation for Virtual International Day of the Midwife which was live over the internet where I talked about my own experiences of Pregnancy Birth and Midwifery care.</p> <p>I also hold a meeting which gives Medical students the opportunity to meet Pregnant Women/ New Mothers and other Health Care Professionals ,Breastfeeding counsellors and other Local support groups where they can share experiences of using the services available and it gives all sides a voice.</p> <p>I am currently training towards becoming a La Leche League Leader to support Women on their Breastfeeding journey.</p>
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I am also beginning an Access to Nursing and Midwifery Course next week with the Hope of becoming a Midwife.

These things above are mostly voluntary positions , usually I offer Pregnancy, Birth and Post Natal services to support women having empowered Birth experiences and to signpost them support them as they adjust to life with a Little Baby. I also work part time as a passenger assistant, chaperoning children with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities from their home to school and then back again. The training which I experienced for this was extremely beneficial and interesting in helping me understand how needs vary from person to person.

I enjoy singing in my church choir and spending time with my family.

What you would hope to achieve as MVP Vice Chair.

My Hope is to bring awareness to what it is that Pregnant women and New Mothers crave. Which for the most part is to help them have their voices heard. Which means making networks between Pregnant Women and Health Care Professionals

If Midwives don't have enough time and Health Visitors don't have enough time to listen to a pregnant Woman's concerns or a New Mother's Birth story then creating something, a group of people who can and who are available so that women have an opportunity to talk and can hopefully feel more positive about their pregnancies, about their ability to give birth, having had their questions answered. With knowledge of what will happen during the Birth Process they can come into Motherhood feeling empowered and feeling excited to have a little baby, strong in their decisions and supported in her choices . Information being readily available for Women to be able to make informed decisions about what is right for her and her baby and her family is also paramount.

From what I have heard from Mothers at my meetings and in day to day life, this is what I hear across the board. They feel like their Midwife doesn't have time for them, they feel they are on a conveyor belt with not much conscientious practise being experienced. Not in all cases I hasten to add, but in some cases and it feels like too much. Women should be able to experience pregnancy for the wonderful experience that it can be with positive memories which do last a lifetime knowing that she made the best choice with the information that she had at the time. Instead of an experience which may haunt her for her lifetime.

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Candidate 2 Standing for:

**South Devon
(Torbay and South Devon
Trust area)**

Name	Charlotte Bowen
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What skills, knowledge and experience do you have for the role of MVP Vice Chair.

As an experienced teacher, I have worked in a number of different schools across London, Hampshire and Devon which saw me working closely with families of a variety of different ethnicities and backgrounds. In my most recent role as Curriculum Leader, I was a key part of the school's senior leadership team, responsible for developing and implementing parts of the school's improvement plan. The leadership and communication skills I developed within this role will allow me to perform affectively as Vice Chair of the MVP.

Throughout my Bachelors and Masters degrees and during my PGCE, I was involved in a number of research projects. These projects required the use of qualitative research techniques such as the ability to set up, lead and collate data from focus groups and interviews before making recommendations for improvement. The projects also involved the recruitment of vulnerable people for whom establishing a friendly and safe environment was essential when collecting honest opinions on sensitive topics and sustaining engagement for the duration of the data collection process. These interactions have provided me with a skillset that I believe would be of great benefit when reaching out to and engaging with potentially vulnerable and under-represented families within our community.

Since becoming a mother and electing not to resume full time employment, I have been able to turn my attention to other projects. I own an independent publishing house which designs and publishes books and have just completed and self-published my second children's book. This experience has enabled me to further develop my skills in publishing software such as Microsoft Office and will put me in good stead for coproducing material with the local trust. At the end of last year, I welcomed my baby son into the world. Being new to the Devon area and a first time mother, I was reliant on the postpartum maternity support network to ensure my mental health and welfare were not compromised at a time when I could have felt isolated. My breastfeeding journey was also challenging and so I sought out advice and assistance from many different professionals within the local trust, developing a close

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relationship with the Lactation Consultant. This has left me extremely grateful for the high level of care and engagement that I benefitted from and passionate about hoping to play a part in ensuring others receive the same quality maternity provision.

I am passionate about ensuring that women have a robust and comprehensive support network. This desire has led me to become an active part in my community; organising local meet ups of mothers and carers across all backgrounds via the Facebook and Instagram social network platforms and through the Peanut App. I am confident in using these platforms to engage with women and currently have an active play inspiration Instagram account which has generated a considerable online following of mothers from across the globe. I hope to be able to use my understanding of online targeting and content creation to reach all types of families.

What you would hope to achieve as MVP Vice Chair.

If appointed as Vice Chair of the Maternity Voices Partnership, I will develop a program that engages the families within our community that have previously been under-represented. Having previously designed and implemented a therapeutic intervention targeting those in the community suffering from anxiety, I have a clear understanding of the level of organisation required in order to make this successful as well as experience in overcoming potential challenges relating to recruitment and retention of volunteers.

Working collaboratively with the other MVP leadership team members, I will be proactive in designing a program that is innovative and forward thinking. Never has this been more essential than in the current uncertain times presented to us whilst living under the threat of a pandemic. Supporting maternal mental health and welfare from a distance through a combination of social media, video conferencing platforms such as Zoom and Apps may become an invaluable way of reaching out to these individuals. In line with current Covid19 guidance, face to face communication in the form of frequent meetings or focus groups will be a chance to connect with people more personally, ensuring that all voices are heard equally. Some individuals may require some encouragement to guarantee that there is representation across diverse ethnic and social economic groups.

Creating surveys and online polls will enable me to quickly and efficiently collect data from many different families before analysing and feeding this information back to the other trusts. Comparison of data between trusts and encouraging the sharing of best practice for community engagement will ensure that we continue to work effectively. By building and sustaining this relationship, we will ensure that we work efficiently and draw upon each other's areas of expertise. Also, engaging other organisations within the community such as the local authority, higher education institutions and relevant charities

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will ensure I draw upon their collective experience and connection with the community.

In my previous role as a school curriculum leader, it was important to stay up to date with ever-changing government and local authority guidelines in education. I will ensure I am aware of current maternity service provision and guidance in this new role so that I am best able to respond to the dynamic of our population's needs.

Using my organisational skills, I will maintain strong communication links through the use of email and website updates and will draw upon my prior experience of website design and maintenance I acquired when creating a website for my online business. My other design experience of creating books suitable for global distribution will allow me to be an active member of any local trust resource production. I believe that resources that are accessible and appropriate for different audiences will be the best way of reaching out to families across Devon.

Candidate 3 Standing for:

**South Devon
(Torbay and South Devon
Trust area)**

Name	Sophie Davies
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What skills, knowledge and experience do you have for the role of MVP Vice Chair.

My background is working in childcare in nurseries and nannying. I have also worked as an enabler supporting families with children with additional needs. I have learnt a lot from working very closely with many different families and feel confident in the ability to help other families voice their opinions. I am approachable, polite and well mannered. I have a true passion for maternity since having my daughter last year I followed the positive birthing plan and feel that many pregnant mothers need to have access to more information helping them prepare for their upcoming birth. I had a very positive home birth and would love to help other families have positive birth too.

What you would hope to achieve as MVP Vice Chair.

Having a baby can be the scariest time in a persons life I would like to make mother's feel comfortable, listened too and their options valued. Working along side other professionals to ensure our local maternity unit is a safe and comfortable place for them and their families. I would love to see more

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information and support on social media as I feel this is a platform a lot of mothers now use to read articles and birthing stories.

Candidate 4 Standing for

**East Devon
(RD&E Trust
area)**

Name	Meg Ginsberg
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What skills, knowledge and experience do you have for the role of MVP Vice Chair.

At the start of the pandemic I gave birth to my daughter at Exeter’s RD&E, experiencing recent support and treatment the height of lockdown. My interaction with the local midwives, doctors, nurses and healthcare professionals, during my antenatal and postnatal care, allowed me to gain insight into the operations of local maternity services within Devon. It has fuelled my passion to use my own personal experience, and those of mothers around me, to become a contributing voice as MVP Vice Chair for East Devon.

I have spent the last seven years volunteering as a St John Ambulance Cadet, using my clinical skills to support my local community, providing first aid at events and teaching younger cadets. I have been able to improve my communication skills through my interaction with the public, gain confidence and leadership in my role as leading cadet and therefore fulfil my passion to help those in need. It is this ambition that would allow me to make a positive contribution to Devon LMS, further improving all aspects of maternity care across Devon.

I believe strongly that anyone who uses the maternity services should have a voice, no matter their age, ethnicity or gender. Their own personal experiences should be heard in order to create a strong community for mothers to be and new parents. As a young mum myself, I believe I have a unique perspective on the maternity services in East Devon, which I can use to engage with a wide variety of service users. Additionally, my age has helped me to become extremely knowledgeable and competent using social media, and I would use my skills to increase public awareness of the Maternity Voice Partnership, creating more connections between the services and those using them.

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What you would hope to achieve as MVP Vice Chair.

Over the two years, I aim to listen and support a wide variety of women and families within East Devon, amplifying their voices and their experiences to other service users and the services themselves. Therefore, the services are able to make tailored changes based on personal reflections from the users first hand experience. I hope to reach a larger audience by improving Devon Maternity Voices influence on social media, making specific areas, such as 'neonatal services' and current information more accessible to a greater quantity of people. This is especially beneficial currently as Covid has resulted in regular changes in rules and advice. Additionally, an increased online presence would further benefit the partnership between patient and care provider, as feedback is more readily available.

I believe that unfortunately, the necessary restrictions enforced on maternity care at the moment, as a result of Covid, has resulted in a lack of support for many mothers and families at a crucial time in their lives, impacting drastically on their mental health. There is no health without mental health, so spreading awareness and information to those who need it will be at the top of my agenda. This is another key example where social media can have a positive effect on spreading awareness to individuals across Devon.

To summarise, I would maintain close, regular communication between the other three Vice Chairs and MVP, creating a reliable and unified team. From this, we would be able to have an active input in improving the Devon LMS for mothers and families in the future.

Candidate 5 Standing for:

**South Devon
(Torbay and South Devon
Trust area)**

Name	Nikita Higginson
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What skills, knowledge and experience do you have for the role of MVP Vice Chair.

I believe I would be a suitable candidate for the role of the vice chairperson due to my personal and professional knowledge and experience.

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I am a qualified paramedic and completed my degree in the last year, during university I was voted into the position of peer supporter. The role required me to consider everyone's individual points, listening to everyone in the group, portraying all their views, and presenting them accordingly.

Being able to take on board multiple views and present them so they are heard requires great organisation and exceptional listening skills which I have learnt and improved on over the years.

Going through antenatal and giving birth during lockdown was a huge challenge due to the lack of professional contact. Having been a first time mother to a premature baby at 17, to doing it all again 10 years later was like starting from scratch. This time I was more aware of my care, and let down on several aspects within the maternity services, although my care was not directly affected, it noted some cracks which as a paramedic, seeing parents in their own environment and behind closed doors, I am keen to help fix so that others do not struggle like I did. A problem shared is a problem halved.

Having been through a rollercoaster journey of being a teenage mum, suffering from baby loss, training whilst being a single mum to be a paramedic, to having the most perfect baby boy born during a pandemic. I feel I can listen to other mothers and families and portray their views in the correct way. Empathising with parents and understanding what they are going through will be a strength in itself.

I run a mothers blog, on social media, providing a platform to listen to other mums and dads views, from local maternity services to what nappies are best to just being there to normalise that a wobbly day is ok. Locally I have worked with a company to set up baby groups of socially distancing with mums and dads. Getting things done is top of my list, whilst keeping people safe and happy. Dads are as important as mums in maternity, so ensuring their views are heard is equally as important.

My computer skills are varied with use of google mail, Microsoft office, zoom and Microsoft teams and social media. Having a high level of education and computer-based knowledge is certainly an advantage. As a HCPC registrant, I keep myself updated on new guidance. I am approachable dealing with a wide range of patients daily whilst maintaining professionalism, in sensitive situations. Patient confidentiality is key to this role whilst portraying the views of others and knowing when to ensure that those in dire need of some help are supported whilst keeping professionalism.

I manage my time well and work hard on any project I take on which is why I feel I would be suitable for the role.

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What you would hope to achieve as MVP Vice Chair.

My main focus will be reducing health inequalities with a focus on preventing domestic abuse, reducing smoking in pregnancy and ensuring equality of service for hard to reach groups such as teenage mums, those with disabilities, BAME community, single sex parents and those going through the IVF process.

I would focus on patient feedback learning from mistakes and sharing best practice.

I am passionate about being the voice for those unable or lacking the confidence to speak out.

I would look to form strong working relationships across a range of partner organisations including public and voluntary services while ensuring mother and family voices are heard.

During COVID the maternity and parenting world has changed dramatically, the support of mother and baby groups and health visitor appointments have been reduced. Parents can feel isolated, suffer from poor mental health, and look for inappropriate coping mechanisms such as smoking, and abusing alcohol and drugs.

Domestic abuse rates have increased, with safe places such as schools and workplaces no longer available for victims.

One of my priorities would be to work with local authority public health teams, NHS, and Public Health England to ensure our maternity services introduce routine public health enquiry across all services. I would engage with patients through social media, local community groups, maternity services, and GP surgeries.

Ensuring all patients voices are heard, is even more important during the current COVID pandemic and any future incidences. It is vital health inequalities aren't increased in such times. We must focus on inclusion for the most vulnerable in our society, ensuring parents feeling isolated are supported and can access good quality compassionate maternity services.

I aim to achieve a good platform to help mums and families have a healthy pregnancy, by partnership working, engaging patients with the help of our wider family maternity team.

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Candidate 6 Standing for:

North Devon (North Devon Trust area)

Name	Leona Miles
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What skills, knowledge and experience do you have for the role of MVP Vice Chair.

I have a number of skills which I feel would be valuable as Vice Chair; firstly I am a mother to two girls, both were born via caesarean section at North Devon District Hospital. After my first daughter's birth I did a lot of research surrounding informed birth choices and felt very determined regarding the route I wanted to go with my second pregnancy and birth. I would hope that these experiences would help me whilst listening and talking to parents about pregnancy and birth.

I have also completed the breastfeeding peer support course at Healthy Babies in Tiverton and I have been a volunteer peer support on Bassett Ward since January this year. I spend a good amount of my time listening to mothers and their birth stories and then discussing ways we can make the start of breastfeeding journey easier. I feel that all woman who start their journey into motherhood deserve to have all the information and support they need, should they wish to breastfeed.

In 2017 I volunteered at the weigh in clinic in Bideford for Action for Children. This experience helped me empathise with other new parents and was a rewarding way of offering a little support.

Before becoming a full time mother I worked in various sales and marketing roles. I feel I have many transferable skills, contacts and knowledge which could benefit Devon Maternity Services. For example, I have worked on many social media campaigns, I worked as an account manager for Getty Images, so could ensure all the imagery is fully licensed. And finally, as I have worked in sales I am not afraid to pick up the phone and ask people to help or get involved!

What you would hope to achieve as MVP Vice Chair.

As Vice Chair I would like to bring enthusiasm and passion to the role. But I would also love be able to utilise many of my skills, knowledge and experience as outlined above. As a breastfeeding peer support already I would hope to add additional support to the trust and help improve breastfeeding support to expectant parents. I personally had great support and help with both my

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children, but many do not and I'd love for all parents to experience much of what I have from North Devon District Hospital. I mentioned above that I feel strongly about birth choices and this is something I'd be interested in listening and speaking to expectant parents about in more detail; working towards being in a place where parents feel they are armoured with as much information and knowledge going into birth, that they feel comfortable and happy with their choices.

I would also like to use my contacts and knowledge to recruit locally and also work on some social media campaigns. If used correctly, I believe social media can be very powerful and engaging and have a huge impact.

Candidate 7 Standing for

West Devon (UHP Trust area)

Name	Jenny South
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What skills, knowledge and experience do you have for the role of MVP Chair.

As a newborn photographer, I am used to working with maternity clients as well as newborn clients. I can consult with them in a formal manner but also of a friendly approachable level. I've had many families, and mothers tell me stories of their Pregnancy, Labour and Breastfeeding Journeys.

Also in my business I have knowledge of accounting, IT systems and extensive knowledge of social media and Wordpress websites.

I've recently been part of the healthy start scheme in Plymouth and have been part of them launching on social media channels. Through this work I've worked with different departments in both the NHS and local council.

I've also completed my peer support breastfeeding training with Plymouth latch on.

In the past I've been a board member of the Plymouth branch on the NCT (national childbirth trust)

I have my own public liability insurance and D&B

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I'm currently a secretary for my local residents association and was chair of my previous residents association where I used to live.

What you would hope to achieve as MVP chair.
I'd hope to continue pushing forward the standard of care for expectant families. Listening to peoples stories and struggles for years, I've heard so many innovative ideas from families on things that could have been improved for them, some small tweaks, some big. I've also worked with professionals in this time and know the struggles and targets they two are under. But I'm confident that there is a better way to move forward for all concerned.

Candidate 8 Standing for:

**East Devon
(RD&E Trust
area)**

Name	Beth Steele
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What skills, knowledge and experience do you have for the role of MVP Vice Chair.
I am a veterinary surgeon. I worked in practice before taking extended maternity leave after the birth of my daughters (now aged 8, 6 and 3). Working in practice gave me plenty of experience communicating effectively with members of the public and other medical professionals. Medical history taking involves careful active listening, summarising and confirming what has been said and recording it accurately.

I have experienced hospital and community maternity care in South Cambridgeshire and East Devon. Most recently in 2017.

I trained as a breastfeeding peer supporter in 2015. Peer supporters listen, support, share information and signpost. Initially I volunteered for the local children's centre at a breastfeeding support group . When the children's center were unable to continue to offer breastfeeding support I helped set up a replacement support group in my local community (Axminster Baby Cafe). I had to recruit volunteers and fundraise for the money needed to run the group. I am currently chair of the committee and the group is thriving. We now have 5 trained peer supporters and although we have not been able to meet in person

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during the pandemic, we have an active Facebook page that I admin and we have been able to continue to offer support online and via telephone.

Since spring 2019 I have organised monthly Positive Birth Movement discussion meetings in East Devon. I volunteer to give up my time and energy to do this because I am passionate about supporting women and facilitating woman-to-woman support during this important and powerful life experience. (The positive birth movement is an international network that aims to bring women together to share positive experiences of birth, no one type of birth is held above another, the emphasis is on a positive feeling experience for that woman. A positive birth is defined as one in which women feel listened to, respected and where choices are informed by reality not fear.) I have experience of advertising this group in our local community via social media and posters, leading effective and inclusive group discussions and occasionally communicating with our local community midwives about what our group can offer.

Since summer 2019 I have been training to be a breastfeeding counsellor with La Leche League. When I complete my training I will volunteer on the La Leche breastfeeding helpline and I will be able to offer a La Leche breastfeeding support group in East Devon. As part of my counsellor training I am improving my listening skills and also learning a lot about the responsibilities involved in representing an international charity: including the importance of being inclusive, reaching minority communities and behaving professionally at all times, in discussions with women who have had negative experiences with health care professionals where it is appropriate to empathise but not judge.

This spring 2020 I met with our MP to represent about a hundred local families who had taken part in a climate change project. In our meeting I needed to communicate our concerns clearly, concisely and effectively.

What you would hope to achieve as MVP Vice Chair.

Be a good representative for MVP bridging gaps between NHS professionals and service users by being friendly, personable, approachable and professional.

Feeling part of an effective team and forming relationships with a group of like-minded people who want to improve maternity services via involvement with MVP.

Raising the profile of MVP in East Devon - including spreading awareness of the aims and importance. Make it relevant to service users by communicating examples of the ways MVPs have influenced real world changes within Maternity Services. This will help to recruit more volunteers and encourage service users to engage.

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Identifying under-represented communities and innovate ways to engage with these communities and ultimately increase the volume of feedback received from them.

Increase social media reach by sharing relevant, interesting content and sharing posts via community online noticeboards and parenting forums.

Empower families by communicating that their experiences matter and will be listened to. Listen empathically to their experiences. Facilitate their voices being heard.

Communicating effectively with both service users and Trust professionals.

Making MVP available and easy to contact.

Candidate 9 Standing for:

**South Devon
(Torbay and South Devon
Trust area)**

Name	Sarah Thomson
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What skills, knowledge and experience do you have for the role of MVP Vice Chair.

I believe I have various skillsets that would enable me to be successful in this role. Firstly I am a mum of 3, I have had two babies in Torbay Hospital and 1 home birth last July.

I already work within the birth world, I have been a hypnobirthing instructor for 3 years and run my own business Devonmama. I am passionate about supporting women and families to have a positive birth experience. I have supported over 50 women and birth partners and every single one of them gained a positive experience in some way from working with me and completing my course. www.devonmama.co.uk

In January of this year I opened my own studio called Devonmama studio in Paignton. I created a community hub for parents, where they could come and meet new friends, get breast feeding support, do classes such a baby massage etc. It was fantastic and I had such great feedback from the mums and some dads that came along, they felt it made such a difference to them. Unfortunately due to covid I had to make the hard decision to close it. Seeing

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this role come up I feel I could transfer that community support to expectant parents that Ive had experience in before.

Lastly I have been a qualified graphic designer for over 15 years, this is the industry ive always worked within until I discovered hypnobirthing. I am competent in any graphic design work, websites, and social media management as I also run a freelance design business called Devonmade. www.devonmade.co.uk

Just another add on, I am a qualified baby wearing peer supporter, I have started work towards my breast feeding peer support qualification with Gillian Hoult over lockdown and I also work with Torbay cloth nappy library. All of which I think would be good info/skill towards this role.

What you would hope to achieve as MVP Vice Chair.

As MPV vice chair I would like to achieve a high level of support to expectant parents. Through information and support, empowering women to feel confident with their birth decisions. I think birth partners have a big role to play and its important that they also feel supported. I myself had two hospital births and both were different, as a first time mum I was a bit like a rabbit in the headlights and I think that is the key time to support women, from their very first experience.

At the same time informing couples that they can have a wonderful birthing experience in hospital as I did with my second baby.

Also Id like to add I experienced an incredible homebirth and the care I received was amazing. I feel that being informed and supported is such an important element of maternity care.

Id like to achieve a successful and trustworthy relationship with a wide range of families enabling them to trust in the maternity services, to look forward their birth experience in a positive way, which will hopefully transfer in more positive birthing experiences. I understand that there will be some circumstances where other factors will come into play and not everyone will have the outcome they hoped for. But I truly believe that with the correct support in place it can dramatically affect the way the families will feel.

Devon Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP) Vice Chair Candidate Statements.

Candidate 10 standing for:

East Devon (RD&E Trust area)	South Devon (Torbay and South Devon Trust area)
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Name	Louise Webster
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<p>What skills, knowledge and experience do you have for the role of MVP Vice Chair.</p> <p>I feel I am a suitable candidate for the role of MVP chair/vice chair as I am passionate about continuous improvement and helping others. As a new mum myself, I would love the opportunity to be able to apply my current skills and knowledge into the maternity services. I pride myself on being approachable, trustworthy and attentive. I enjoy new challenges and actively look for ways to reshape and improve processes in order to provide more efficient and user friendly services.</p> <p>Having welcomed my baby daughter in July this year, I am currently on maternity leave from my role as a 24/7 Operations Manager for BT. As a manager, it is my responsibility to hold engaging and compelling meetings, complete monthly and annual reports, liaise with service users and key stake holders and provide coaching and training to my team of 15 shift workers. During my 10 year career with BT I have been fortunate enough to be able to implement many changes to procedures and policies with the aim of improving the overall experience for our service users. I have applied this in a variety of settings including complaint management, fault reporting and in my current role, assisting 999 services. In doing so, I've learned that it is vital to engage well, be personable and accountable. Listening to feedback from service users, team members and key stakeholders was imperative for me to be able map out and shape these changes. Working within the ever changing technology industry has also allowed me to be creative and innovative with the way I communicate with my team and peers.</p> <p>Pregnancy and parenthood is an experience like no other. The majority of my antenatal and postnatal care took place during the current coronavirus pandemic and it has made me realise just how important the support of maternity services are for women, their babies and their families. Now more than ever, engagement is vital. We are fortunate enough to have a variety of communication channels at our disposal and I feel these should be utilised to</p>
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their full potential. I believe the experience and knowledge I have in this area is a great asset.

What you would hope to achieve as MVP Vice Chair.

At a time where restrictions dictate the manner of how maternity services are currently run, I would like to be the voice for women and their families. I would use this as a platform to help develop and create safe alternatives to in-person services they feel would be beneficial to them, such as live virtual antenatal classes which they can do with their partner. I feel this would also allow me to gather constructive feedback on how current services are viewed so that they can be altered to help drive improvements. Longer term, I would like to work on developing channels of communication that work well for families of all backgrounds. This could be via strengthening current social media platforms, or creating something new, like an app. As a new mum, I know how challenging it can be to find reliable, accurate and trustworthy resources online. With lots of contrasting information, it can often be difficult to determine what the correct solution to a simple problem may be. Having spoken with many of first time mums who feel the same, the term 'winging it' often comes up during discussion which I believe indicates how much uncertainty there is behind their decisions. To combat some of these doubt filled worries, I would like to help develop an online library of approved resources that parents can turn to for support and reassurance. I feel this should be easy to locate, all in one place and presented in a simple yet engaging way.