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Coproducing maternity service improvements in Nottingham

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This presentation

- A little about maternity
- Two successful projects that NUH and SSBC have co-produced
 - WhoseShoes?®
 - Father Inclusivity



A little bit about us...

- Two maternity units – QMC and City Hospital – both sites have alongside Midwife-Led Units and Level 3 Neonatal Units
- We have recently launched a brand new home birth team
- Around 7,000 births per year
- Nottingham City is ranked 11th most deprived out of 317 councils in England*
- Nottingham City is a culturally and linguistically diverse city
 - 42.7% of Nottingham City's population identify from the global majority** (national average is 15%)
 - Over 29 different languages used in maternity that require interpreters

*2019 JSNA
**2021 Census data



Why WhoseShoes?®

Oct 2018: SSBC purchased the game and licence for NUH and hosted a workshop for parents in the City

- This led to us launching two new midwifery continuity of carer teams in Nottingham in 2019

Jan 2023: Worked with University of Nottingham, Sherwood Forest Hospital and LMNS

- Used the game to bring people together to discuss home birth → led to the establishment of our first dedicated home birth team

Oct 2023: Worked with SSBC, LMNS and the NUH Charity

- Missing voices: The maternity experiences of Black, Asian and minority ethnic people in Nottingham



WhoseShoes?®

What is it?

- An engaging board game
- Uses crowdsourced scenarios and poems on cards based on lived experience of families and staff
- It's creative, quirky and very powerful

How do you play it?

- Participants discuss ideas, thoughts and emotions in response to scenarios and poems
- These are captured in-brief on post-it notes
- Then gathered and translated into a graphic record capturing the range of conversations and themes





What did we learn?

- There is an appetite to work together
- As a coproduction tool, WhoseShoes?® was well received by families, staff and other stakeholders
- Preparation is crucial to success
 - **Scheduling:** Avoid clashes with school closures or religious holidays
 - **Planning:** Advertise the event and get your posters translated into local languages, link up with community groups to spread the word, decide what game cards to use, think about table plans and facilitators and try to ensure a good mix of people/experiences at each game table
 - **Practical:** Invitations and reminders, capturing interpretation needs, crèche, dietary preferences, is the venue accessible for the people we want to reach?
 - **Emotional:** Having support on hand for anyone who feels the needs to speak to someone on a one-to-one basis
 - **Recognition:** That families are giving up their own time to attend so think how to make them feel appreciated e.g. a hot lunch, a crèche, a £20 shopping voucher for a supermarket as a small gesture of thanks



What did we do next?



Research
England

- We wanted to keep this conversation going
- So we developed a funding proposal with Nottingham University Business School to try something new with the WhoseShoes?® tools
- Granted £48k from Research England – August 2024
 - Recruit at least five 'Citizen Scientists' to undertake training to lead the games, and if they are willing, to take part in thematic analysis, report writing and presenting findings
 - Researchers from NUH and the University will provide support to the Citizen Scientists
 - Funding will also support a dedicated researcher, a local community expert and the game creator and bring together other maternity services nationally addressing the same challenges

Father Inclusivity

Are we welcome here?

- Dad's being sent home once the baby is born
- Some women miss their partners and feel alone and anxious with a new baby to care for in hospital
- Dad's were missing out on valuable bonding time and learning how to care for their new baby

Going BIG

- Introducing recliner chairs for partners
- Promoting the 'Dad's pack'



CQC Picker Survey

Question: Thinking about your stay in hospital, if your partner or someone else close to you was involved in your care, were they able to stay with you as much as you wanted?

How were NUH doing when we first introduced partners staying overnight?

- 2018 – 54% (national average was 70%)
- 2021/2022 – 22% & 27% (impact of COVID on visiting)

How are NUH doing now the SSBC recliner chairs are in-situ?

- 2023 – 86% (national average was 57%) – this was our most improved score since 2022 across the whole survey



Pre-implementation survey 2018

What staff thought



What women thought



Partnership with SSBC

Sending the messages 'you are welcome, you are important too'

- We introduced the information pack for new fathers or 'dad's pack' early in the pregnancy
- We also created posters with QR codes that helped dad's to download the pack while in the hospital

Road testing chairs in clinical settings

- SSBC encouraged NUH to involve fathers and staff in trialling a range of recliner chairs, rating them on comfort and practicality

Ambition

- We wanted every in-patient bed in maternity to have a recliner chair for a dad (or non-birthing partner) to relax and rest on while supporting their partner – this meant we need over 118 chairs



Feedback from families 2023

Our baby was transferred soon after birth to Nottingham's neonatal unit, We live 5hrs drive away – being able to stay with my wife and baby has made such a difference to us as a family

It's excellent to have somewhere to nap

The chair is very helpful when I am feeding the baby

The chairs are so comfy!

The chair is very helpful for skin to skin

The chair is extremely helpful for breastfeeding

What did we learn?

- Patience... and more patience... system change is a long process
- Bring everyone with you – ‘if you want to go far, go together’
- Introducing recliner chairs along with the information pack for new fathers helped to change the conversation
- Be prepared to pivot when problems arise - but, beware of knee-jerk reactions too
- Involving parents leads to better solutions – leading with a user-focus involves challenging institutional boundaries
- Doing procurement differently – SSBC encouraged us to take a collaborative approach involving parents and frontline staff in selecting equipment

This is what families in maternity look like now most days....



Thank you's

- To all the families who have engaged with NUH and are contributing to our improvement journey
- To the whole team at SSBC for believing in NUH to deliver the changes we developed together and encouraging us to think bigger and better
- To the team at Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Maternity and Neonatal System for their wisdom, guidance and support along the way – often going above and beyond
- Nottingham Hospitals Charity for supporting us to reach out to seldom heard, or easily ignored families
- Nottingham University Business School for being both a critical friend and willing to partner on research funding bids to do more coproduction with local people



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Thank you. Any questions?

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