

Scalable, on-the-job, midwifery training using mobile, AI & VR technologies; a feasibility study

AUTHORS Dr Andrew Darby-Smith // NHS Anaesthetic Registrar & Founder/CEO of Upskill.Health
Ms Francesca Crane // Practice Development Midwife, University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Trust
Ms Sophie Bohacs // Saving Babies Lives Lead Midwife, University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Trust
Ms Stephanie O’Leary // Practice Development Midwife, George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust
Dr Aggie Bebbington // NHS Resident Doctor (Currently practising in Te Whatu Ora - Health New Zealand)



Image 1. Ms Stephanie Wells, Maternity & Neonatal Voice Partnership (MNVP) Representative, sharing her lived experience in training content

1. The Problem

DESPITE THE COMMITTED WORK OF NHS STAFF, MATERNITY SERVICES CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE TO MEET SET STANDARDS.¹

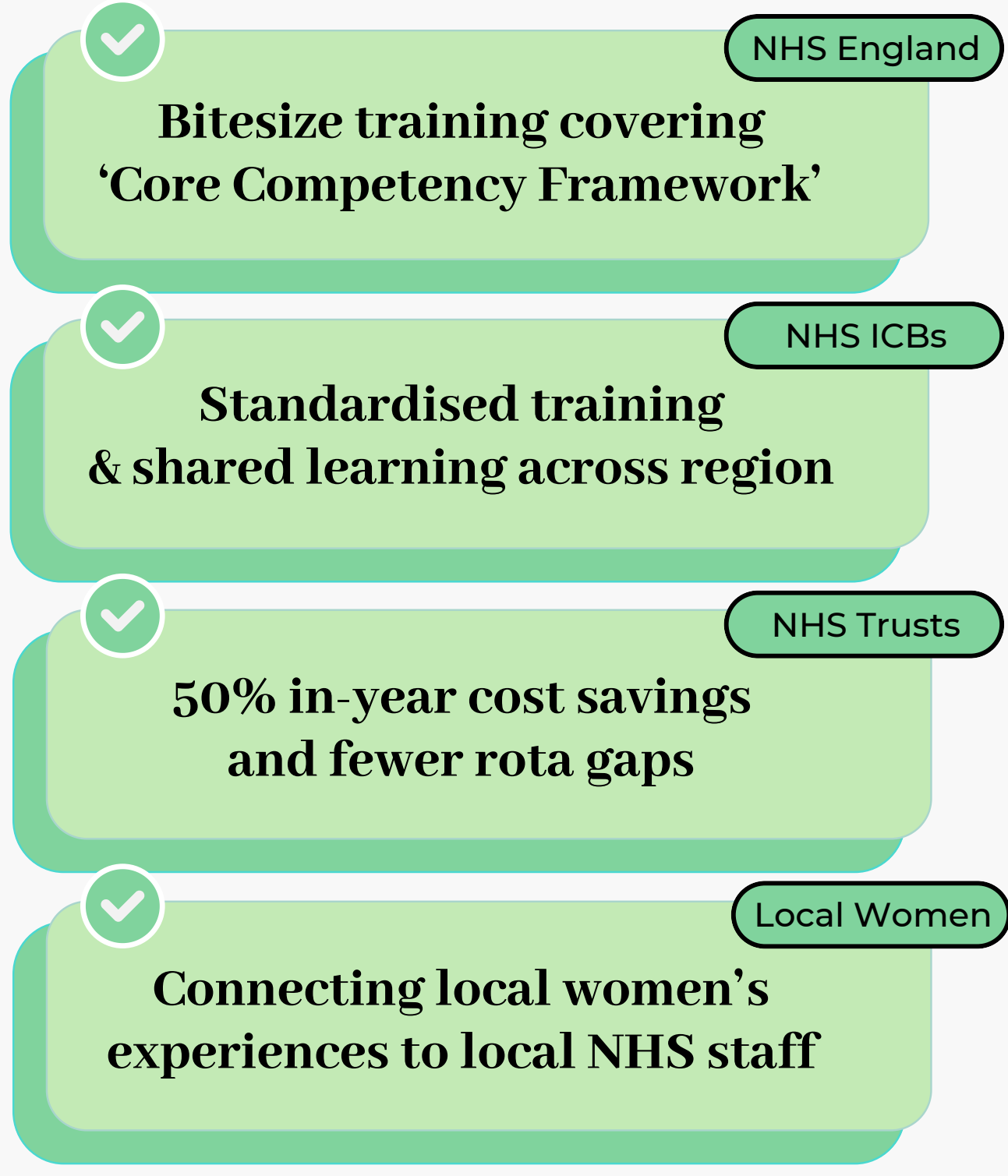
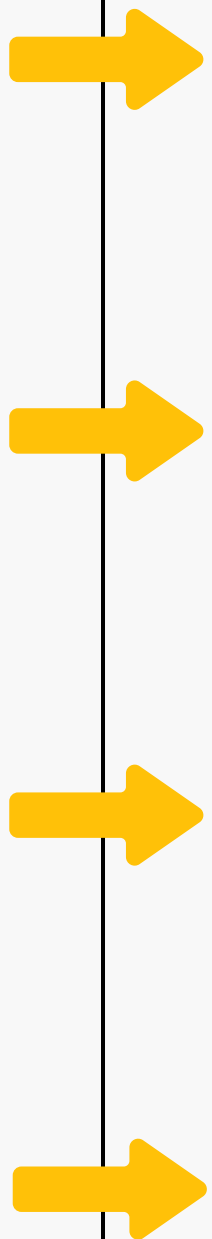
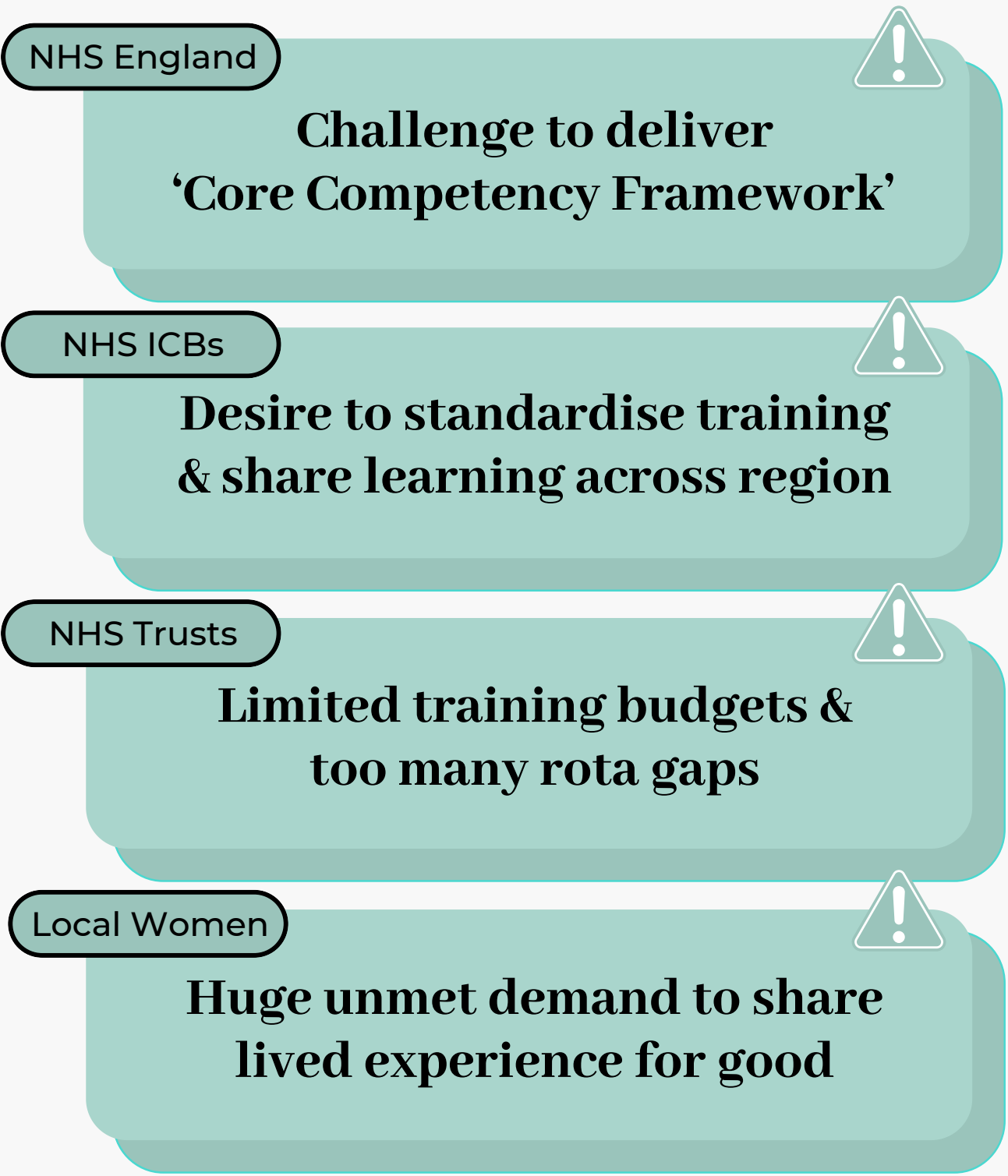
REPEATED NATIONAL INQUIRIES HAVE CONCLUDED THAT WE NEED TO SCALE ON-THE-JOB TRAINING IN ORDER TO IMPROVE SAFETY IN MATERNITY SERVICES.²

NHS ENGLAND HAVE RESPONDED BY PUBLISHING THE ‘CORE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK’ (CCF); A NEW, ON-THE-JOB TRAINING CURRICULUM, MANDATED TO BE DELIVERED IN EVERY TRUST IN ENGLAND.

DESPITE THIS, ICBS AND TRUSTS ARE STRUGGLING TO DELIVER TRAINING DUE TO:

- STRETCHED BUDGETS = TOO EXPENSE TO RELEASE STAFF
- WORKFORCE = TOO MANY ROTA GAPS TO RELEASE STAFF
- TRAINERS = TOO FEW TRAINERS TO DELIVER EXTRA TRAINING

IN ADDITION, LOCAL WOMEN FREQUENTLY FEEL DISEMPOWERED AND UNABLE TO SHARE THEIR LIVED EXPERIENCE TO DRIVE POSITIVE CHANGE IN THEIR LOCAL SERVICES.



2. The Solution

WE'RE COMBINING MOBILE, AI AND VR TECHNOLOGIES TO RE-DESIGN ON-THE-JOB TRAINING AND DELIVER THE 'CORE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK' IN BITESIZE TUTORIALS THAT FIT 'IN THE FLOW' OF CLINICAL WORK.

THROUGH WORKING CLOSELY WITH COVENTRY & WARWICKSHIRE'S MNVP, WE HAVE RE-DESIGNED THE 'SAVING BABIES LIVES' CURRICULUM TO BE DELIVERED THROUGH 5 X CASE STUDIES, BASED ON REAL WOMEN'S LIVED EXPERIENCES.

OUR TRAINING PROVIDES A MIXTURE OF:

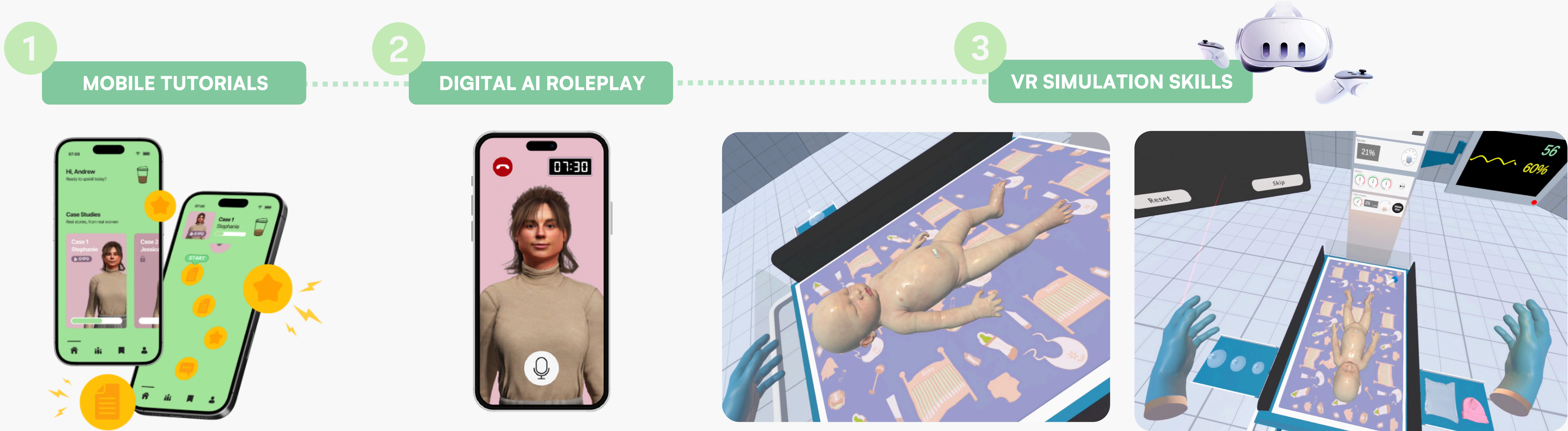
- MOBILE CONTENT
GAMIFIED, SHORT-FORM (<10MIN) TUTORIALS AVAILABLE ON NHS MIDWIVES' PERSONAL DEVICES.
- DIGITAL ROLEPLAY
CONVERSATIONS WITH AI-POWERED AVATARS, TRAINED ON THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF REAL, LOCAL WOMEN.
- VIRTUAL REALITY SIMULATION
PROVIDING BITESIZE, REPEATABLE NEONATAL LIFE SUPPORT TRAINING, ON-DEMAND.

4. Mixed Methods Research Evaluation

WE'RE CONDUCTING A MIXED METHODS RESEARCH EVALUATION OF OUR PROJECT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH COVENTRY UNIVERSITY:



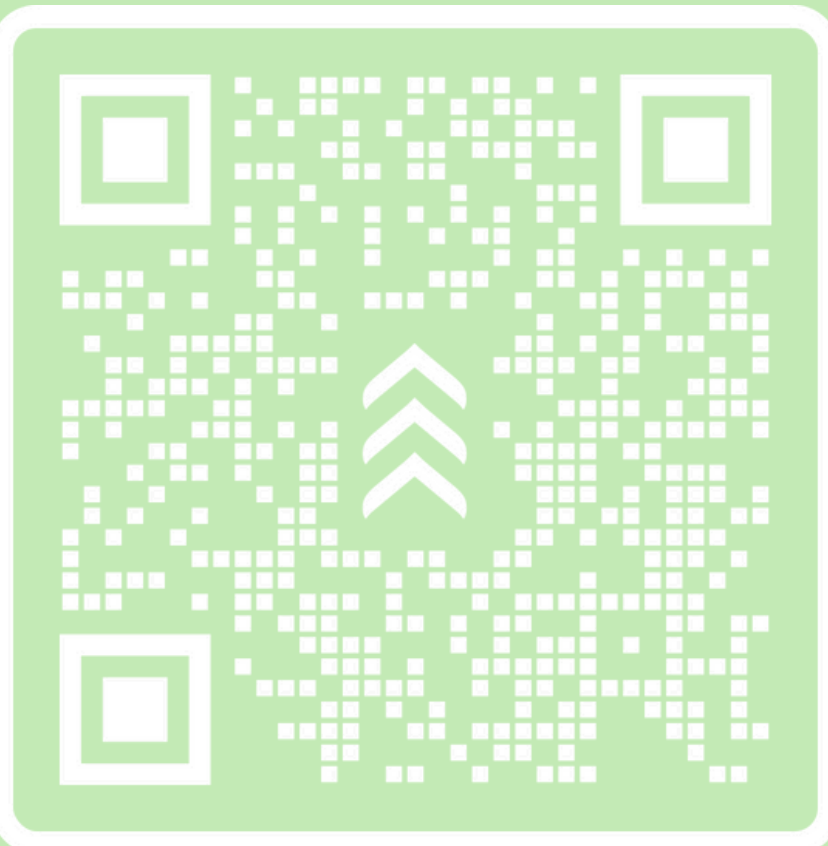
3. Combining Emerging Technologies for Scalable Training



5. Follow Along

WE'RE LAUNCHING OUR PROJECT ACROSS 3 X NHS TRUSTS TO 200+ NHS MIDWIVES IN JUNE 2025 AS A 3-MONTH PILOT.

SUPPORTED BY COVENTRY UNIVERSITY, OUR MIXED METHODS STUDY WILL EVALUATE FEASIBILITY, ACCEPTABILITY AND EFFICACY OF THIS APPROACH BEFORE LOOKING TO SCALE OUT IN OTHER REGIONS.



WANT TO KNOW MORE?



WATCH THE VIDEO OR SCAN THE QR CODE

1. CARE QUALITY COMMISSION. 2024. NATIONAL REVIEW OF MATERNITY SERVICES IN ENGLAND 2022 TO 2024 [ONLINE].
2. NORMAN, J.E., STOCK, S.J. AND HARMER, C., 2022. AFTER THE OCKENDEN REVIEW: A CHANCE TO RESET MATERNAL AND PERINATAL CARE IN THE UK?. THE LANCET, 399(10344), PP.2331-2333.