

REVERSE MENTORING TO IMPROVE TEAM-WORKING AMONG OBSTETRICIANS AND MIDWIVES: A HOSPITAL'S EXPERIENCE

Dr Idowu Adeoye, Ms Farah Siddiqui - University Hospitals of Leicester

INTRODUCTION

Obstetrics as a specialty can be quite litigious. In recent times, UK maternity services have been experiencing an increasing number of investigations for sub-standard care. The Ockenden report in 2022 was published following one of these. It emphasized the need for a safe way of raising concerns and effective team working especially between obstetricians and midwives. To help achieve this, a reverse mentoring pilot project was conducted in 2023 among staffs working in the delivery suites of the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust.

The Reverse mentoring model itself has in the past been used to help tackle issues of racism, diversity, and equality in many sectors. For us in UHL, we sought to identify whether a form of reverse mentoring between midwives and obstetricians could improve collaborative working and allyship on our delivery suite.

AIM:

To improve working relationships through mentoring.

OBJECTIVE:

For professionals to gain insight from the experience of their colleagues, looking into challenges faced in the delivery suite and how concerns are raised.

To help address collaborative team working, in the hope of fostering cultural transformation, better workplace satisfaction and more empathetic delivery of maternal services

Pressures within the unit - What each group say of themselves and think of the other



PROJECT ANALYSIS

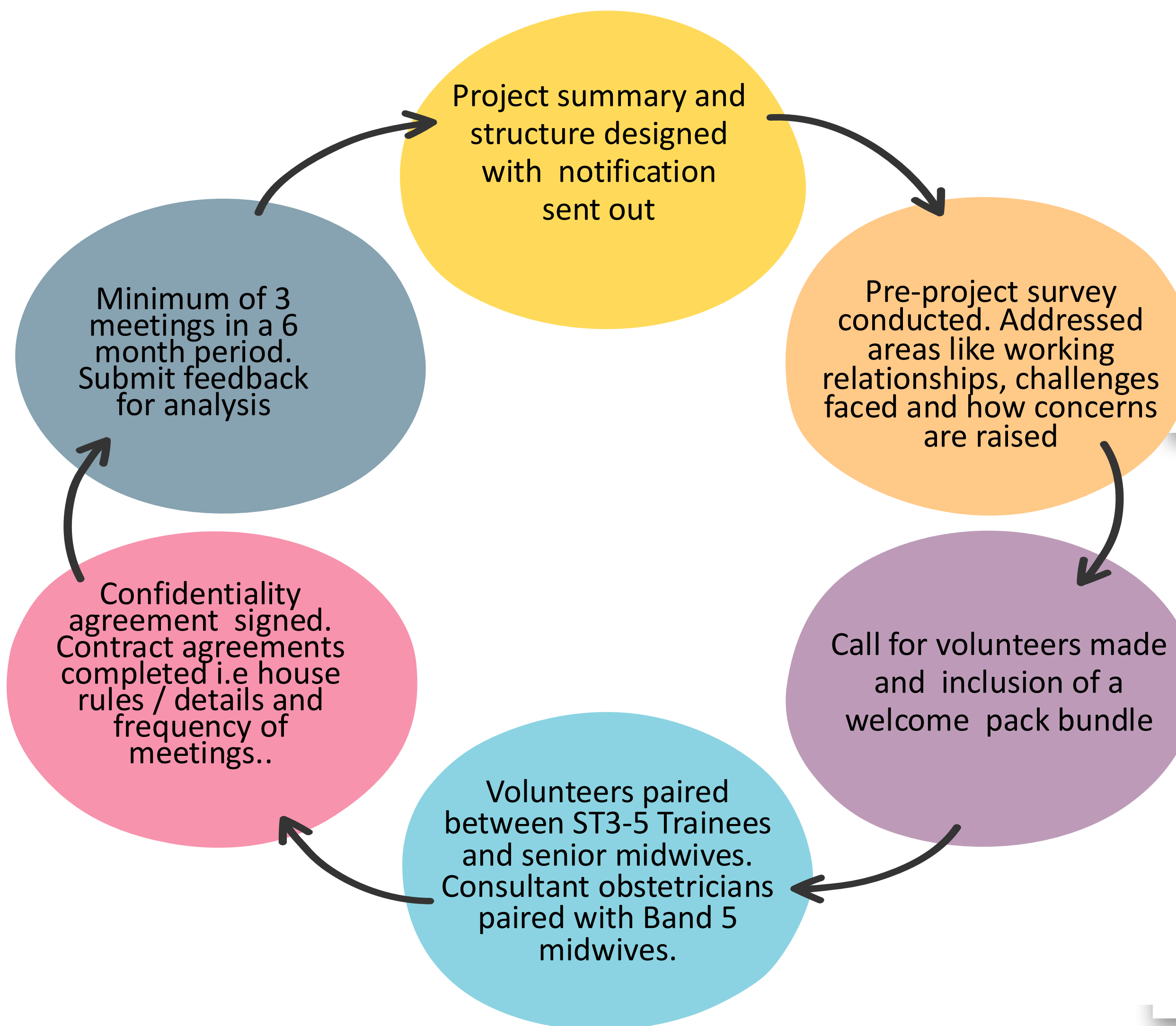
Only pairs who completed each stage of the project with feedback submitted were included in the final analysis. 4 pairs in total met the above.

They each had a minimum of 3 meetings lasting at least 30 minutes

DETAILS OF THE MEETINGS:

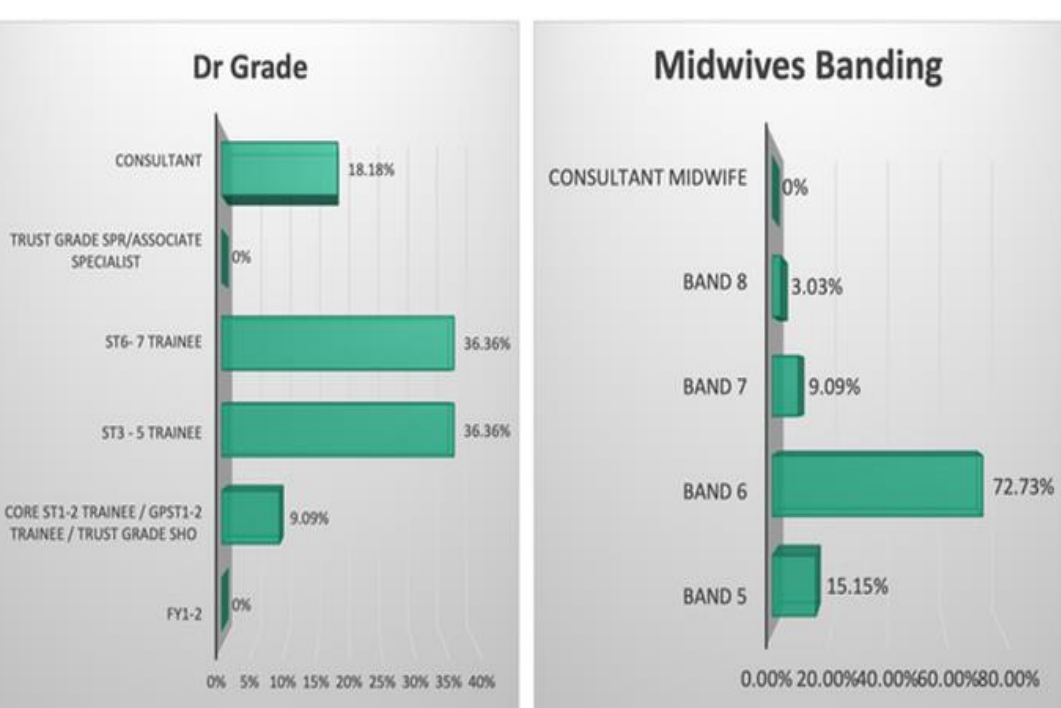
- Ice breaking and getting to know each other
- Communication with no hierarchical boundaries
- Team working, allyship and issues impacting on these
- Support after difficult workplace incident
- Mutual respect and accountability
- Pressures faced within the unit, importance of role interpretation
- Undermining of skills, bullying, safety empowerment

METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

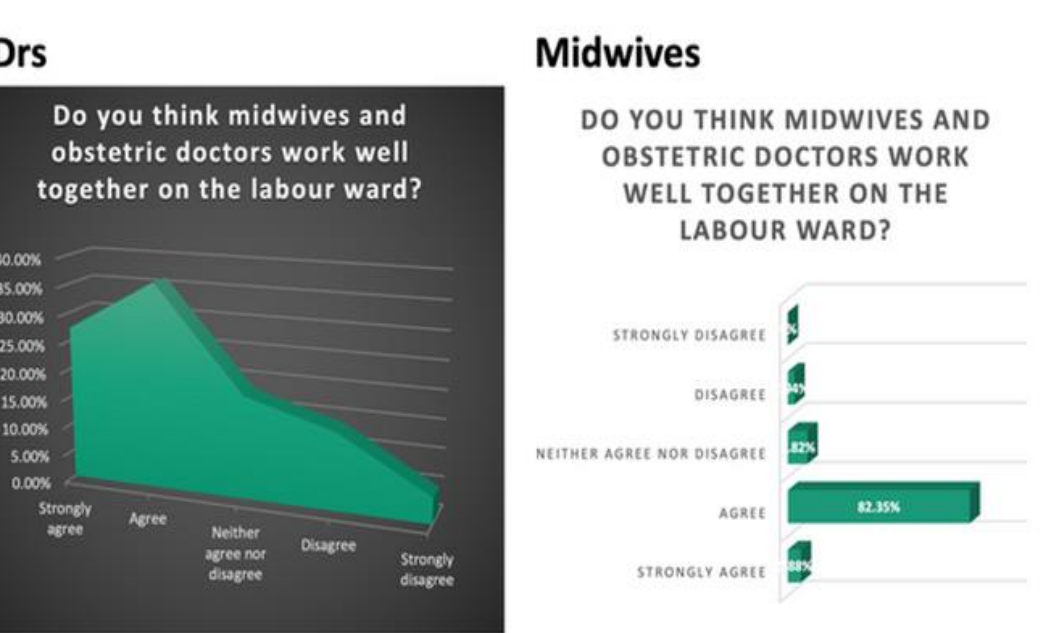


ANALYSIS FROM PRE-PROJECT SURVEY

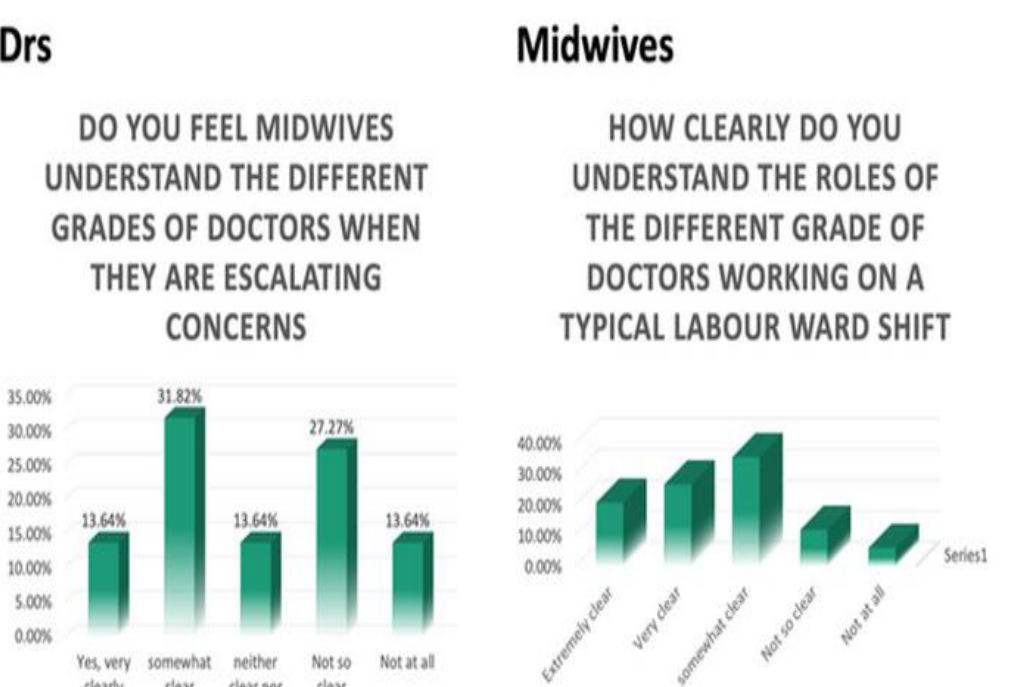
Staff Grades



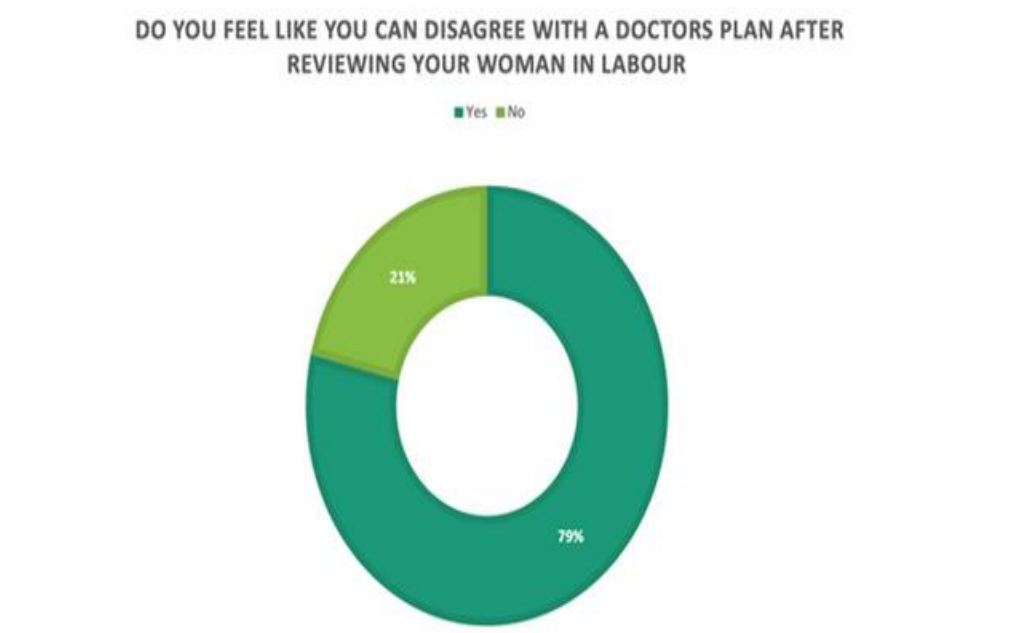
Team working?



Role interpretation



Safety empowerment - Midwives



RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

The pre-project survey showed both group agree on issues such as junior midwives lacking senior support (80% respondents), low staffing with high patient volume (100% respondents) and increased workload without defined break times especially for doctors). These highlighted issues formed the crux of the discussions at the meetings. Issues of inappropriate role interpretations, practices that were considered defensive and instances of undermining of skills were also tackled. Since the completion of the project, the department has continued to build its business case for better staffing. Also, there has been an introduction of colour coded badges for easier role identification, respect for each others protected break times, and campaign for more kindness and civility. More than two-thirds of participants found the meetings helped in breaking barriers and understanding constraints and biases between both groups. They feel very strongly about the continued positive effects it can bring and will like a periodical continuation of the project in the future. While there is still a lot of work to be done, there is a unanimous agreement that such a model does have the potential to help with culture change the and enhance better team working on our delivery suite.

CONCLUSION:

This pilot project provided an insight into how reverse mentoring can help achieve better team working among the workforce on the delivery suite and improve care delivery. There is no doubt that improved teamworking, and cultural transformation will lead to better and more humane services. As henry ford said, 'if everyone is moving forward together, success takes care of itself'.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE:

Stakeholder involvement in next cycle to promote greater engagement and optimize potential for what it could achieve

Contact: Dr Idowu Adeoye (idowu.adeoye2@nhs.net), Ms Farah Siddiqui (farah.Siddiqui@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)