

Summary of Midwifery and Medical Staffing recruitment at OUH

Oxford University Hospitals makes continual and concerted efforts to increase recruitment of midwives and obstetricians. This paper summarises our current and past efforts.

1. Midwifery Staffing

A midwifery staffing ratio of 1:29 (midwife to birth) is required to provide maternity services for women and their families in hospital and the community. This is a standardised figure and relates to the numbers of women who are in the care of the maternity services overall, including antenatal and postnatal care. This is totally separate from the Trust's ongoing commitment to providing one to one midwife care in labour which we have successfully achieved over many years.

The current funded midwifery establishment at OUH is 280 whole time equivalent (wte) midwives. At the beginning of October the midwifery establishment was 274.59 wte. The shortfall is made up of a combination of vacancies, maternity leave and secondments.

In spring 2018, there was a successful recruitment campaign and 40 new midwives have been recruited to join the midwifery team. They are expected to all be in post by mid-November. The current midwifery numbers have improved and will continue to improve slightly in November. However, we are unlikely to meet our midwifery establishment of 280 wte if you exclude maternity leave.

As there continues to be turnover in the staff, recruitment will continue throughout the year. It is important to recognise that 27% of the midwifery workforce is over the age of 50. The maternity service is predicting a significant shortfall in staffing from June 2019. This is a national shortfall in midwives and not just isolated to Oxfordshire.

In July 2018, BirthRate Plus was commissioned to review the midwifery establishment against the level of acuity and complexity of women being cared for in Oxfordshire. The final report is due in November but the initial findings suggest that this will confirm the shortfall in the agreed midwifery establishment.

Oxfordshire is reviewing its recruitment and retention strategy to minimise future service disruption and to provide a comprehensive maternity service for women and their families. This includes the following:

Recruitment

- Recruitment open days
- An agreed uplift in the number of midwives to be recruited
- Continue to actively advertise for midwives throughout the year
- Work with Oxford Brookes University to recruit student midwives due to qualify in 2019

- Training six Assistant Practitioners (band 4) to support midwives
- Reviewing new roles i.e. Discharge Coordinators, Recovery Nurses, Obstetric Nurses etc.
- Offering Midwifery Apprenticeships
- International recruitment to India in March 2019 for Obstetric Nurses
- Flexible working opportunities
- Considering flexible working packages for midwives wishing to retire and return
- Working with the Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Local Midwifery System to review workforce planning and initiatives across the Thames Valley

Retention

- Proactive exit interview with an emphasis on what would support individuals to stay
- Promotion of flexible working opportunities
- Offering further training opportunities for staff
- Working with the wider Trust to look at incentives to recruit and retain staff
- Review Preceptorship package

Other

- Further reconfiguration of services to minimise the need to close beds
- Use of agency staff
- Incentives for staff
- New roles

2. Medical Staffing for HGH Obstetric unit (Middle grade doctors)

To attract and recruit doctors into the middle grade posts at the Horton General Hospital the Trust strategy was

- to run a regular advertising campaign through the BMJ rather than just NHSP as this would attract an international field.
- to agree to pay for visa expenses and support applicants with sponsorship and an enhanced salary above the national level was offered.
- to include “special interest” sessions at the John Radcliffe and the opportunity to work towards completing RCOG Advanced Speciality Training Modules as part of the job.

The campaign has been successful in attracting many applicants. However, most do not have the clinical experience required for the position.

Table of recruitment

Date of advert	Applications	Shortlisted	Attended for interview	Offered position	Accepted offer
20/04/16	5	4	1	0	N/A
20/05/16	7	3	3	3	0
13/07/16	4	3	2	2	1
12/08/16	8	3	3	3	3
12/09/16	8	4	2	1	1
07/10/16	7	3	1	1	1
27/10/16	9	2	0	0	0
03/01/17	13	6	4	2	2
16/03/17	31	3	1	0	0
06/08/17	13	3	3	2	1
02/10/17	17	3	1	0	0
20/03/18	19	3	3	1	0
29/05/18	18	4	In process now (was scheduled for September but unable to take place due to illness)		
30/08/18	24	2	November		
1/10/18 (still running closing date 27/11)					

Although 15 doctors were offered positions six did not to take up the offer. Of these, five decided to remain with their current employer and one was unable to provide the required references.

Summary

Over the last 2 ½ years, nine doctors have accepted offers of employment. However, there are only two doctors remaining in post. The maximum total number of doctors in post reached five in February 2017 (however one of these was already working out their notice). Of the nine doctors who did accept offers:

- two doctors resigned for family reasons.
- five doctors took up offers of other training positions in the UK. (Two Royal College of Obstetrician and Gynaecologists NTN posts, two senior fellow posts in specialist training, one Royal College of General Practitioners NTN post)

The two doctors that remain in post have been assimilated into the middle grade on-call rota at the John Radcliffe Hospital but also provide antenatal care at the Horton General Hospital.

1. Consultant Obstetricians

Hospital	Funded establishment (wte)	Actual establishment (wte)	Difference
Horton General	5	2	-3
John Radcliffe	15	13	-2
Total	20	15	-5

The Horton General Hospital consultants are general obstetricians and gynaecologists. There has been one retirement and two who no longer practice obstetrics.

The consultants at the John Radcliffe Hospital are Obstetricians most of whom (70%) have higher training in specialist obstetrics e.g. fetal medicine. The absences are due to both vacancies and long term sickness. There will be an additional locum consultant Obstetrician in place by December 2018.

2. Junior Doctors and Middle grade doctors at John Radcliffe Hospital

Level	Funded establishment (wte)	Actual establishment (wte)	Difference (wte)
ST6/7	10	7	-3
ST3/5	10	10	0
FY2/CT1-2/ST1-2	14	10	-4

To address the gaps in these rotas, there are plans to recruit senior clinical fellows and trust grade doctors with speciality training in fetal medicine, urogynaecology and laparoscopic surgery. However the specialty has an attrition rate nationally of 30% which has led to a national shortage of doctors so the posts are very competitive and recruitment is challenging even in large teaching hospitals.

3. Neonatal nurses

	Establishment (wte)	Actual establishment (wte)	Difference (wte)
SCBU (Horton General Hospital)	13	4	-9

To run the Special Care Baby Unit at the Horton General Hospital 13 wte neonatal nurses are required. There are four currently working at the John Radcliffe Hospital who would work at the Horton General Hospital. Despite running recruitment programmes there have been no new successful appointments.

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