



# Strategic Perinatal Workforce Plan FAQs

## 1. What is the scope of the Strategic Perinatal Workforce Plan?

The scope of the Strategic Perinatal Workforce plan is professionals who are part of perinatal teams across NHS Wales organisations, providing services and care to women, new-borns, and their families during the antenatal, intrapartum, postnatal, and neonatal period, up to 28 days, or whilst a baby is in or under the care of a neonatal unit.

## 2. What professions are in scope?

We know that many professionals play an important role in caring for women, babies, and their families throughout the perinatal period. This plan focuses specifically on staff who work clinically within maternity and neonatal services. While colleagues in primary care and community settings, such as GPs, Practice Nurses, and Health Visitors are vital to the wider system of support, their roles go beyond perinatal care and are covered in other strategic workforce plans. The Strategic Perinatal Workforce Plan has a professional focus on:

Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) - registered neonatal nurses, midwives and perioperative nurses

Neonatal nursing and maternity support workforce (Bands 2, 3 and 4)

Maternity theatre workforce

Obstetricians and Gynaecologists; Consultants, training grade doctors, Staff and Associate Specialist (SAS) grades and locally employed doctors

Anaesthetists working in Obstetrics; Consultants, training grade doctors, Staff and Associate Specialist (SAS) grades and locally employed doctors

Neonatologists: Consultants, training grade doctors, Staff and Associate Specialist (SAS) grades and locally employed doctors

Specialist Physicians working in maternity services

Physician Associates

Workforce with competencies in sonography and obstetric radiology

Allied Health Professionals, including psychologists working to support staff and patients

Health Care Scientists

Pharmacists

## 3. What are the key challenges faced by the perinatal workforce in Wales?

Whilst the birth rate has fallen 15.4% over the last decade the perinatal workforce in Wales faces several key challenges, including increased complexity, workforce shortages and retention challenges, an ageing workforce, competition for skills, economic pressures, changing workforce expectations, and the impact of global and national policies.

## 4. What are the main goals of the Strategic Perinatal Workforce Plan?

The main goals of the Strategic Perinatal Workforce Plan are to build the multi-professional workforce, enhance education and training, promote leadership, career development and culture, and transform the workforce to meet the evolving needs of perinatal care.

## 5. How does the plan address the issue of workforce retention?

The plan addresses workforce retention by promoting flexible working options, structured career development, access to wellbeing support, and implementing targeted retention interventions. It also emphasises the importance of compassionate leadership and creating a supportive workplace culture.

## 6. What are the key actions outlined in the plan to improve education and training for the perinatal workforce?

Key actions to improve education and training include developing a multi-professional core competency framework, standardising training for neonatal nursing, enhancing training for transitional care and neonatal outreach, and promoting continuous professional development. The plan also focuses on developing career pathways and providing training in digital literacy and genomics.

## 7. What does the term Perinatal refer to?

The term perinatal has been used instead of maternity and neonatal based on feedback to emphasise the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to care provided during pregnancy, birth, and the immediate postnatal period.

## 8. How will we implement the plan?

We are developing a detailed implementation and communication and engagement plan. We will work closely with Welsh Government, health boards and NHS Wales Performance and Improvement colleagues to implement the Plan effectively providing regular updates via a newsletter and social media posts to share the progress of the work.