

Recruitment pack

# **Maternal Mental Health Alliance Trustee**

May 2025



## Introduction and background

The Maternal Mental Health Alliance (MMHA) was founded in 2011 by people with lived experience, healthcare professionals, and organisations who understood the impact of perinatal mental problems and shared a commitment to improving the lives of women and their families.

Today, the MMHA is a UK-wide charity and network of over 130 member organisations. We work with parents, families, clinicians, and academics to ensure all women, birthing people, babies, and families have access to high-quality, compassionate mental health care. We bring the perinatal mental health community together and make change happen by combining the power of real-life experience with clinical and professional expertise.

We actively contribute to significantly improving mental health outcomes for people who experience discrimination, trauma and deprivation during the perinatal period and tackle systemic inequity and injustice.

The MMHA has recently been awarded a [5-year grant by the National Lottery Community Fund](#) to tackle maternal mental health inequities through community action. This project, due to start in Spring 2025, will develop, test and replicate a model of community-based decision making, support and service provision that is led by women with lived experience. This project aims to achieve system change locally and nationally to improve the mental health of marginalised women and is the next phase of the MMHA's programme to tackle maternal mental health inequities across the UK. This will be our main focus over the next five years and will dovetail with other activities aimed at achieving our mission, where funding allows.

For further information about the MMHA please visit our [website](#).



## Our culture and values

### Our organisational values

#### Ambitious

We won't stop until every woman in the UK experiencing a [perinatal mental health problem](#), or at risk of developing one, has access to the right care and support for her and her family.

#### Anti-racist

The MMHA is committed to being an anti-racist organisation, recognising the harmful effects of racism on maternal mental health, individuals, and society. We strive to model inclusivity and accountability by embedding anti-racist values, behaviours, and language across all aspects of our work. We recognise that there is a lot of work for us to do, but we are dedicated to continuous learning, reflection, and external challenge in order to create meaningful and lasting impact.

#### Passionate

Our desire and determination to bring about change for women and families is fuelled by the [lived experience](#) both within and beyond the MMHA.

#### Collaborative

We value the power of lived experience, clinical, academic and campaigning expertise coming together across the four nations of the UK. We are open to expertise beyond the MMHA and aim to combine efforts wherever possible.

#### Humble

We seek to act as a catalyst, acknowledging the considerable work of others now and in the past, fostering and supporting the *collective efforts* of the maternal mental health community.

#### Resourceful

We are aware that women and families are suffering *right now*, so we strive to make a difference as a matter of urgency, in the most effective and efficient ways possible. We deliberately keep our overheads to a minimum and invest in robust learning and evaluation to help inform where to focus our time and other limited resources.

### Our beliefs

#### Relationships

At the heart of maternal mental health are relationships – between mother and baby, family members, health professionals and across society. Relationships are also key within the Alliance. Nurturing connections between [member organisations](#), [staff](#), trustees and experts by experience is fundamental to effective collective work for the benefit of women and families.

#### Social justice

Although all women are at risk of developing a perinatal mental health problem, we recognise that some will face multiple disadvantages and stigma in speaking out or seeking help. We want to ensure all women, regardless of circumstances, background or life experience, can access perinatal mental health care. We also join the wider mental health community in calling for parity between physical and mental health.

#### Walking the walk

We are mindful that the wellbeing of our experts by experience, staff and all those who work with and on behalf of the Alliance is paramount. This commitment is prioritised in our culture, policies and communications.





## Who we are looking for

We are always looking to increase the range of voices around the table to bring in different experiences and skills which is essential if we are to make the best decisions for the MMHA and the people we serve. People who make good trustees tend to be good at working with others, ready to speak up, thoughtful and open to learning, able to stand back and see the big picture as well as taking their trustee governance responsibilities seriously.

As an alliance of member organisations MMHA trustees also need to understand and appreciate the contribution our members make, as well as valuing our skilled and committed staff team and champions.

Experience of working with charities is helpful.

In addition to the expertise described above, our trustees need to have the following:

- A deep concern for maternal mental health and a commitment to improving services and care for women and their families
- Adaptable communication skills so able to get on with different types of people, to listen well, understand where others may be coming from and able to adapt to different groups and settings
- An awareness of oneself, especially of how emotional or difficult subjects and events can trigger uncomfortable feelings and be able to manage these well
- Able to participate in discussions and be part of shared, collaborative decision making, ready to learn and compromise as well as speaking up in a thoughtful and timely way
- Readiness to take on trustee responsibilities and contribute to all aspects of Board business.

Our intention is always to reflect, learn and grow and to put in place structures that will make sure our new trustees are valued, supported and can make a full contribution to the Board and the MMHA. As always, the MMHA welcomes people with perinatal mental health lived experience.



## What do trustees do?

Trustees have overall control of a charity and are responsible for making sure it's doing what it was set up to do. Trustees are the people who lead the charity working closely with the Chief Executive. Being a trustee means making decisions that will impact on people's lives, so it is an opportunity to really make a difference.

Whilst it is an unpaid role, we cover travel expenses and other reasonable expenses to be a trustee such as child and other care arrangements.

For more information about the role of a trustee, [this link is useful](#).





## How we will choose our new trustees

We aim to make the recruitment process a mutual one, so that you get to know us and we get to know you. In the end we want to make the right decision for you and for the MMHA.

If you would like to find out more about the role, please contact Kate Billingham, Vice-Chair, on [recruitment@maternalmentalhealthalliance.org](mailto:recruitment@maternalmentalhealthalliance.org). If you would like to discuss any perceived or actual barriers to you applying, or have any concerns, Kate would be particularly keen to hear from you.

## Application process

To apply to be a trustee please send an email to [board.admin@maternalmentalhealthalliance.org](mailto:board.admin@maternalmentalhealthalliance.org), including the following information:

- 1) A brief description of yourself - What are your strengths? What would your colleagues / friends say about you? What experiences would you bring? (max 250 words)
- 2) Answers to the following questions:
  - Why do you want to be a trustee of the MMHA? (max 250 words)
  - What values and issues matter most to you? (max 250 words)
  - Which of the 2 trustee roles are you interested in and why? (max 250 words)
- 3) The name of one person who we can ask for a reference.

## Use of AI

We understand that AI is a tool that some of us have adopted and is now a way of working. However, we would much rather you did not use AI to write your covering letter or answer the questions, as this limits our ability to hear your voice and personality in your application.

## Deadline

The deadline for receipt of initial emails is **9AM, Monday 9 June 2025**.

We will offer all applicants a group online session with trustees and the CEO to ask questions and find out more about the MMHA. This session will be recorded and made available to anyone who can't make it.

After the session, a panel of trustees and other key stakeholders will review applications against the stated criteria and select the most suitable applicants to meet us and discuss overall suitability.

