

Amplifying Maternal Voices project evaluation summary



Maternal Mental
Health Alliance



Overview

The Amplifying Maternal Voices (AMV) project was a partnership between the Mental Health Foundation (MHF) and the Maternal Mental Health Alliance (MMHA) to spotlight mothers' maternal mental health experiences from seldom-heard communities. In pursuit of accessible care for all women and families, we hosted a national conference and learning event to break down barriers and produced an engagement toolkit to inspire action at a local level.

Working with a diverse range of voices, such as MMHA lived experience champions, MMHA member organisations and local grassroots contacts, provided invaluable learning for both our organisations. The project has helped us better understand the challenges on the ground and what our role can be in contributing to addressing inequities in perinatal mental health care. In addition, it has provided a springboard for further connections with local organisations.

This is a first step, with much more we want to do – watch this space!



Project aims

Whilst there has been significant progress within perinatal mental health care, urgent action is required to address **shocking inequities, systemic racism, and funding gaps**.

With this in mind, the **key aims of the project** were to:

1. Improve mothers' and families' access to support for their mental health.
2. Provide a platform for seldom-heard voices and reach new groups.
3. Produce and disseminate a resource (**Engagement Toolkit**) to inspire change at a local level.
4. Share project learning through a national conference in March 2023 and an online event in March 2024.



Key activity numbers



151 attendees
at the national conference in March 2023



80 participants
across eight workshops



126 attendees
at the online learning event in March 2024



Around 350 hours
of community engagement



Over 100 conversations
to develop the AMV toolkit

Key findings

A Theory of Change (ToC) was developed in collaboration with the AMV project's external evaluators, Clear Impact Consulting. This served to steer the evaluation and evaluation tools, providing a hypothesis to test against and refine.

The ToC included mechanisms of change, which spoke to the experiences and conditions that MMHA and MHF aimed to create in order to deliver on the outcomes.



Clear Impact Consulting found that:

Stakeholders have been willing to engage and trust in the AMV project

- Engagement was maintained throughout the project through a proactive approach
- There was a clear focus on listening, building meaningful relationships in an authentic way, being open to change and showing up
- Some of the speakers at the learning event had spoken at/attended the conference in March 2023

“The quotes that they’ve got are genuine quotes. They have not doctored anything I’ve said. They’ve taken that from my first ever bit that I ever said, so fair play to them. Well done.... I said it, I knew it was going to be on a website, and I’m glad my words meant enough for them to put it on a toolkit, so I’m glad it resonated with them.”

Stakeholders could see how their involvement had made a difference to the toolkit

- Lived and living experience was central to the project
- Feedback had been acted on and reflected in the final toolkit
- Range of involvement opportunities provided, including workshops, 1-2-1 conversations and written feedback
- Invitation to take part and a range of options was welcomed

The online AMV learning event was well attended and interviewees thought it worked well

- 126 people attended the learning event
- Responses to interim survey and interviews provided positive feedback about the 2023 national conference
- Interviewees indicated that the format worked well and participants liked the sharing of experience and learning from people leading groups and organisations, as well as the integration of the lived experience voices

“...I’ve learned so much from listening to so many of the stories, not just from our champions, but from the AMV conference, through the learning event a few weeks ago, there’s been so much which has been incredibly eye opening. And I think one of the big commitments that I need to make is to not stop trying to learn.”

Initial reflections suggest the toolkit has potential to be useful but further dissemination is required

- Website analytics show a large spike of views on the day of the launch
- Over a four-week period there were 1,864 views from 541 users, with around 3.45 views per user suggesting that people are returning to the toolkit multiple times
- Pages related to the breaking barriers section of the toolkit made up the largest proportion of views
- Further engagement needed to ensure use of the toolkit

Stakeholders consider the toolkit relevant and have shared with their own networks

- Feedback has been positive, including about the toolkit’s design and accessibility
- Several of those interviewed liked the videos and how they incorporated lived experience in a direct and powerful way
- Resource shared by multiple partners, social media presence amplified

“This resource is going to be extraordinary for us. We’ve been seen, our voices are not being erased and that’s what we’re mirroring and replicating in our communities... The work with MMHA and MHF is a gamechanger, because we’re out here fighting.... trying to understand elements in a changing landscape and they’ve put together a resource that’s for us.”

The project has influenced a wider approach to equity

- Involvement with the project had influenced language and the questions asked about equity as part of wider work across both project partners
- Scoping out further work looking at specific barriers

Too early to measure some of the intended outcomes – more to do

- Further engagement with national policy makers and commissioners
- Longer term impacts of this work

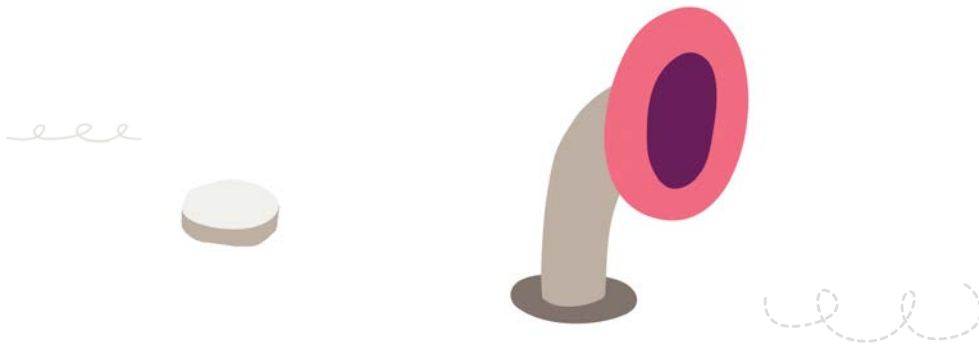


The principles of the AMV project will continue for both the MHF and the MMHA, and both organisations are continually striving to ensure all voices are listened to, please do get in touch if you have any suggestions.

Contact and links

- Mental Health Foundation
- Maternal Mental Health Alliance
- More about the AMV project
- Explore the AMV toolkit

If you have any questions about the toolkit or suggestions for content, please contact info@maternalmentalhealthalliance.org



You are NOT alone



**Maternal Mental
Health Alliance**

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**SCAN
HERE**
to explore the
AMV toolkit



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Clear Impact Consulting.



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Voices project possible.