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An observation of midwives' health behaviour change language

Submission date
25/07/2024

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
02/08/2024

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
25/09/2026

Condition category
Pregnancy and Childbirth

[X] Prospectively registered
[_] Protocol
[_] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[_] Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
In pregnancy, poor health behaviours, such as smoking, alcohol consumption, poor diet, lack of physical activity and non-adherence to vaccination, contribute to adverse pregnancy outcomes. However, pregnant women continue to engage in unhealthy behaviours. Pregnancy has been identified as a Teachable Moment, as it is a life event that presents an opportunity for health behaviour change. As the primary maternity care provider for most women, midwives are in an optimal position to support women with this behaviour change. However, midwives find these conversations challenging and de-prioritise them in clinical practice. The quality and success of behaviour change conversations are heavily impacted by the communication of the health professional. One aspect of communication, where there has been little attention in midwifery research, is the language used within these interactions. Evidence has shown that language is powerful within midwife-woman interactions, however, research has not yet explored the language used by midwives when discussing health behaviours. Therefore, the current research aims to explore the language used by midwives in health behaviour change discussions.

Who can participate?
Midwives who are employed by Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust and work in a hospital antenatal clinic or the community, providing antenatal booking appointments. Pregnant women aged over 16 years of age who attend their antenatal booking appointment.

What does the study involve?
To explore the language used by midwives in health behaviour change discussions, antenatal booking appointments in hospital and community antenatal clinics will be audio-recorded and the data analysed using qualitative methods.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
It is hoped that by exploring midwives' language, areas to target for improvement can be identified and an intervention developed.

Where is the study run from?
University of Manchester

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
July 2024 to December 2025

Who is funding the study?
National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) (UK).

Who is the main contact?
Hannah Talbot, hannah.talbot-3@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

Contact information

Type(s)
Public, Scientific, Principal investigator

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Additional identifiers

Integrated Research Application System (IRAS)
336985

Study information

Scientific Title
An observational study of the language used by midwives in health behaviour change interactions within the antenatal booking appointment.

Study objectives
What language do midwives use when discussing health behaviour change in the antenatal booking appointment?

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)

Approved 24/10/2024, London – Bromley Research Ethics Committee (2 Redman Place, Stratford, London, E20 1JQ, United Kingdom; +44 (0)207 104 8118; bromley.rec@hra.nhs.uk), ref: 24/LO/0693

Primary study design
Observational

Study design
Single-centre qualitative observational study

Study type(s)
Other

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Health behaviour change language used by midwives

Interventions
The PI will audio-record antenatal booking appointments and all data relating to health behaviours will be extracted from the transcripts and analysed using qualitative inductive content analysis. There will also be an element of deductive analysis, such as the Behaviour Change Counselling Index (BECCI), used to record aspects of the behaviour change communication.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
The health behaviour change language used by midwives measured using data collected and analysed during antenatal appointments at one time point

Key secondary outcome(s)
There are no secondary outcome measures

Completion date
01/12/2025

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
Midwife participants
1. Active NMC registration
2. Employed by Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust
3. Work in a hospital antenatal clinic or in the community, providing antenatal booking appointments

Pregnant women
1. Over 16 years of age
2. Attending their antenatal booking appointment.

Participant type(s)

Patient, Service user

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Mixed

Lower age limit
16 Years

Upper age limit
70 Years

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
33

Key exclusion criteria
Midwives
1. No exclusion criteria

Pregnant women
2. Women who are under 16 years of age

Date of first enrolment
01/12/2024

Date of final enrolment
17/07/2025

Locations

Countries of recruitment
United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre
Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust
Cobbett House
Oxford Road
Manchester
England
M13 9WL

Sponsor information

Organisation
University of Manchester

ROR
https://ror.org/027m9bs27

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
Medical Research Council

Alternative Name(s)
Medical Research Council (United Kingdom), UK Medical Research Council, Medical Research Committee and Advisory Council, MRC

Funding Body Type
Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype
National government

Location
United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The datasets generated and analysed during the current study will be published in a peer-reviewed journal in the form of anonymised direct quotations. Participants will provide written informed consent for this data sharing.

IPD sharing plan summary
Published as a supplement to the results publication

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Results article		22/09/2026	25/09/2026	Yes	No