

Midwifery Co-Leader Report for MERAS AGM August 2020

This has certainly been another busy and exciting year for MERAS. The 2019/20 year started with MERAS concluding the new DHB MERAS MECA. It finally felt after all these years MERAS had its own MECA for DHB employed midwives. The journey to arrive at that point had provided many opportunities to raise the profile of employed midwives within the DHB's and to highlight the important role that midwives play. This was only achieved with the support and efforts of all our MERAS members.

During this year there has been a focus on the roll out of CCDM and Trendcare across all 20 DHBs. In most DHBs maternity has been one of the last areas to be included in the programme. CCDM has highlighted that maternity is different to other areas of the hospital and has hopefully led to an increased understanding of the acute and unpredictable workloads in maternity services.

The introduction of the national CCDM maternity coordinator saw increased momentum and support for the introduction of CCDM within maternity services. The national CCDM Maternity Advisory Group (MAG) at which I and Michelle Archer represent MERAS and Claire McDonald attends on behalf of the College has provided a forum that oversees the rollout of CCDM within the maternity services, sharing resources, good ideas and advice amongst maternity services. The MAG group also ensure that material developed as part of CCDM is fit for purpose for maternity and makes changes where needed in a coordinated way. MERAS also has representation on the SSHW governance group and along with Director of Midwifery Paula Spargo ensure there is a midwifery voice at the governance level of CCDM.

The Midwifery Accord was an outcome of the MERAS MECA terms of settlement and is progressing a range of initiatives with the Ministry of Health and DHBs to improve the recruitment and retention of midwives within the DHBs. There has been a collaborate approach to the project with representation from the Midwifery Leaders group, the DHB COO's and HR managers, MERAS, Ministry of Health and NZNO. Progress on some aspects of this work was delayed during the lockdown and there was no funding to support this work from the budget though there has recently been announced an extension to the Voluntary bonding scheme. However much of the work can progress even without funding from the 2020 budget.

Work has progressed this year between MERAS and the Midwifery Leaders group to develop a Midwifery Career Pathway for midwives working in DHBs. This pathway is close to being finalised and will contribute to the work of the Midwifery Accord and the Senior Midwives working party.

A senior midwives and education funding working party was also agreed as part of the DHB MERAS MECA. Though this working party has only had one meeting I have been working closely with many of the Midwifery Leaders as they look at opportunities to develop senior midwifery roles within their own DHBs. Discussion have started on recommencing this working party.

MERAS membership has continued to grow this year and the MERAS workplace representatives need to be acknowledged for the amazing work they do in connecting with members and potential members and providing support to resolve issues at a local level. It has been great to see the willingness in most workplaces for members to be MERAS workplace representatives when these positions become available. Over the last year several MERAS workplace representatives have taken on senior midwife roles including midwife manager and Director of Midwifery roles. This seems to

indicate that being a MERAS workplace representative provides midwives with an opportunity to develop and showcase their leadership abilities.

Karen Gray started in the role of MERAS organiser this year and her focus at present has been in Canterbury and Southern DHBs becoming involved in the introduction of CCDM and Trendcare at Canterbury and West Coast, a working party at St Georges and the new hospital build at Dunedin. Its being great to have Karen join the MERAS team.

On a personal note June 2019 marked my 10th year working for MERAS and it has been a delight to see the way MERAS has grown over the 10 years, the energy and passion of all our members and the way we work closely with the Directors of Midwifery, Midwifery managers and the College of Midwives to promote and support employed midwives and to enhance midwifery leadership opportunities within the DHBs and other maternity units and Trusts. I am looking forward to another exciting year for Midwifery and my continued work with Jill, the MERAS NRC and all the MERAS workplace reps and members to advance the interests of employed midwives.

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