

BABY LIFELINE'S COMMUNITY MIDWIFE BAG



EXPERT-LED AND CO-DESIGNED

EQUIPPING COMMUNITY MIDWIVES WITH THE
TOOLS THEY NEED TO GIVE THE SAFEST CARE



BABY LIFELINE

Baby Lifeline is a national charity that works together with the NHS, experts, national bodies and service users to prevent avoidable tragedies in pregnancy and childbirth.

Its multi-professional advisory panel of renowned experts informs its priorities.

ANSWERING THE NEEDS OF COMMUNITY MIDWIVES

Through Baby Lifeline's training in obstetric emergencies in the community across England, it became clear that there was no national standard for what equipment was carried to home births - even in the case of emergencies.

1 in 3

Research carried out by Baby Lifeline and supported by the Royal College of Midwives found that **1 in 3 midwives** did not feel that their current home birth bag adequately met their needs or was safe for use.



UNSAFE

30% reported that the bag/container used was not safe for use.



INADEQUATE

40% reported that their bag/container did not adequately meet their needs.



EMERGENCIES

27% did not feel that they carried everything they might need to facilitate a home birth in the community (including dealing with an emergency).



SELF-FUNDED

35% sourced and purchased the bag/container themselves using personal funds.

"We have had to source our own bags...this has the potential to be unsafe in an emergency."

DEVELOPING THE GOLD STANDARD

Baby Lifeline recognised the urgent need to both standardise equipment carried by midwives to births in the community, and implement clear processes to keep equipment and supplies fully stocked and up to date. The charity convened an expert panel to develop a 'gold standard' of bags and contents that would effectively support community midwives.

The aim of the working group was to design a standardised bag using human factors principles, where all equipment that may be needed at a community birth (including emergencies) was easily accessible, thus equipping community midwives with everything they need to provide the safest possible care to women and babies.

MULTI-PROFESSIONAL EXPERT WORKING GROUP



The multi-professional working group who developed the initial list consisted of: senior midwives with experience working within community settings, consultant obstetricians, pharmacists, neonatologists, and paramedics.

We also collaborated with and were advised by:
Resuscitation Council-UK Neonatal Life Support Subcommittee, Members of the Women's Pharmacy Team at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust, and the Consultant Midwives Network.

The bags are divided into eleven colour coded compartments, and each compartment contains everything needed for that specific stage of labour and birth, including emergencies.

SECTIONS INCLUDE:



CATHETERISATION AND
CORD PROLAPSE



CANNULATION & IV FLUIDS



ADULT RESUSCITATION



POSTNATAL



PPE AND DISPOSAL



TRIED AND TESTED

Baby Lifeline worked with suppliers to develop and fund the fully-stocked bag. 69 of these bags were trialled for 4 months in 10 sites throughout the UK and Channel Islands. The sites were selected in collaboration with NHS colleagues to give a variation in geography, population density, and home-birth rate, and included 8 NHS Trusts, 1 Welsh Health Board, and Jersey General Hospital.



96% OF RESPONDENTS FELT THE BAGS WERE ORGANISED IN A WAY THAT MADE IT EASY TO FIND EQUIPMENT THAT WAS NEEDED.



88% OF RESPONDENTS WOULD RECOMMEND THE BAG AND ITS CONTENTS TO FELLOW COMMUNITY MIDWIVES.

MORALE BOOST

Feedback received via telephone with one site lead said that the project has had a really positive impact at their trust. They said that the bags were 'like Christmas' for the community midwives, and it has made them feel really valued - a big boost for morale.

OF BENEFIT IN AN EMERGENCY

"I like the idea that if this was standardised across our community team that when I arrive as a second midwife I would know exactly where to find anything I may need. Currently, because we all pack our kits up differently, I feel I need to spend time on arrival familiarising myself as to where everything is in my colleague's kit. This is clearly of benefit in the case of an emergency."

FEEDBACK FROM TRUSTS SHOWS THAT THE BAGS HAVE CREATED:



STANDARDISATION



QUALITY
IMPROVEMENT



BETTER SYSTEMS
BEING INTRODUCED
TO ENSURE ITEMS
ARE KEPT IN DATE



THE INTRODUCTION
OF CHECKLISTS

"...I think the bag is really incredible, it makes me feel safer at a home birth. It is really well organised and amazingly light considering."

MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE SERVICE

Updating the contents and bag in light of feedback and the latest guidelines ensures that the project remains up-to-date and ensures longevity. By working with clinical experts and frontline staff, the project has evolved to ensure that the bag meets the needs of community midwives on the ground.



SAFER BIRTH ENVIRONMENT

The colour coded pouches support midwives to find what they need quickly and easily, saving valuable time in a life-threatening emergency and supporting patient safety.



STANDARDISED

Second, or 'buddy' midwives arriving at a birth to support a lead midwife, also benefit from rapid location of the items they need, as all bags are standardised.



REDUCES WASTE

If a section is not needed, it is not opened, therefore preserving its integrity and reducing infection, making it a safer option for patients. This also reduces waste for trusts.



SAFER FOR STAFF

The bags can be carried as a rucksack (weighing 12kg) and we can also supply a small wheeled trolley (recommended), reducing health and safety risks for staff.



COST-EFFECTIVE

Each bag is guaranteed by the manufacturer for a minimum of two years, and is likely to last for five, making it a cost-effective purchase.



SUPPORTING BEST PRACTICE

Each bag has crib cards for obstetric emergencies - allowing the midwives on scene to easily access evidence-based best practice guidelines in a high-pressure environment to optimise care.

A NATIONAL STANDARD IN THE UK AND FURTHER AFIELD

To date, Baby Lifeline has supplied over 1,500 bags to healthcare providers across the UK and Channel Islands. The bags can be found in over 130 different organisations spanning all regions of the country. It can also be found internationally, as part of Baby Lifeline's Ukraine Appeal, which is sending life-saving aid to the frontline in Ukraine.

UK STANDARD

The bag has now become the nationally recognised kit carried by community midwives to births across the UK.



LIFELINE ON THE FRONTLINE IN UKRAINE

We have also sent over 150 bags to the frontline in Ukraine. This will enable the safest births possible on the frontline.

The bag has meant that professionals attending births in settings like bunkers, metros, and in the community have what they need when resource is limited.

The appeal is ongoing and you can find out more at babylifeline.org.uk/ukraine.



MULTI-
PROFESSIONAL
EXPERT
WORKING GROUP

EVIDENCE-BASED

HUMAN FACTORS
PRINCIPLES



PILOTED IN
TRIAL SITES

CO-DEVELOPED
WITH COMMUNITY
MIDWIVES

COSTS

£888+ VAT per fully equipped bag and £95 + VAT per small wheeled trolley

Please note: The charity will manage the order and delivery of the bags/trolleys and first set of contents. Thereafter purchasers will be responsible for replenishing the contents.



   @babylifeline
www.babylifeline.org.uk
info@babylifeline.org.uk