

The supervisor of midwives also:

- contributes to activities such as confidential enquires into maternal deaths and stillbirths and deaths in infancy, risk management strategies, clinical audit and frameworks for clinical governance;
- provides advice and support to midwives about practice issues;
- provides professional leadership;
- ensures that midwives have access to the statutory rules and guidance and local policies to inform their practice.

HOW TO BECOME A SUPERVISOR OF MIDWIVES

National guidelines on the nomination, selection and appointment of supervisors of midwives are available from your local supervisors of midwives or your LSA Midwifery Officer.

The role is open to any midwife who has been qualified for three years and who has been practising for at least one year in the two years immediately prior to application, who meets the person specification and is supported by her peers (NMC 2004). You will also be required to undertake a course of preparation for the role (NMC 2006).

REFERENCES

LSA Midwifery Officers UK Forum and Nursing and Midwifery Council 2008
[Modern supervision in action – a practical guide for Midwives](#), NMC, London.

Nursing and Midwifery Council 2002
[Preparation of Supervisors of Midwives](#). NMC, London.

Nursing and Midwifery Council 2004
[Midwives rules and standards](#). NMC, London.

Nursing and Midwifery Council 2006
[Standards for the preparation and practice of supervisors of midwives](#). NMC, London.

LSA Midwifery Officers UK Forum 2008
[Strategic Direction 2008-2011](#) printing.com, Rossendale.



INFORMATION ABOUT THE LOCAL SUPERVISING AUTHORITIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

PRODUCED BY THE LSA MIDWIFERY OFFICERS APRIL 2008

STATUTORY SUPERVISION OF MIDWIVES

Supervision of midwives is a statutory requirement contained within the Nursing & Midwifery Order 2001 and outlined within the Midwives rules and standards (NMC 2004).

Effective supervision enables the development of midwifery leadership, which creates a practice environment where midwives assume their professional accountability for high quality, evidence based midwifery care (LSA,NMC 2008).

Supervision is acknowledged as a supportive, proactive function that empowers midwives by supporting their practice and professional development.

The philosophy of midwifery supervision ensures that the midwife is confident and clinically competent to carry out her role, supported by her supervisor of midwives, thereby ensuring the safety of mothers and babies.

LOCAL SUPERVISING AUTHORITIES (LSAS)

The functions of the LSAs are specified in the Nursing & Midwifery Order 2001, with the statutory duties further specified in the Midwives rules and standards (NMC 2004). The LSAs are accountable to the NMC for ensuring that these duties are carried out.

THE ROLE OF THE LSAS

Currently, the Strategic Health Authorities within England are designated as the LSAs. Health Inspectorate Wales is the designated authority in Wales and in Scotland and Northern Ireland the Health Boards are the designated authorities.

Whilst public protection remains at the root of statutory supervision, the increased value of statutory supervision is now recognised and the role of the LSAs is to ensure that they are able to influence and contribute effectively to the current NHS agenda (NMC 2002).

THE ROLE OF THE LSA MIDWIFERY OFFICER

There are 16 LSA Midwifery Officers in the UK and all are practising midwives. There are 10 in England, two in Wales, three in Scotland and one in Northern Ireland. They ensure that supervision of midwives is carried out to a satisfactory standard for all midwives practising within their geographical boundaries.

The LSA Midwifery Officers have a professional leadership role which enables them, in an impartial way, to provide expert advice on professional matters (LSAMO 2008).

The LSA Midwifery Officer also:

- appoints supervisors of midwives;
- leads the development of standards and audit of supervision throughout the LSA;
- provides a formal link between midwives, their supervisors and the statutory bodies;
- provides a framework for supporting the supervision of midwives and midwifery practice within its boundary;
- participates in the development and facilitation of programmes of preparation and ongoing development of supervisors of midwives;
- works in partnership with other agencies and promotes partnership working with women and their families.

LSA STANDARDS FOR SUPERVISION OF MIDWIVES

Standards have been developed by LSA Midwifery Officers, in collaboration with local supervisors, to give guidance to supervisors, midwives and others involved with supervision of midwives. The focus is on a proactive model of supervision for all midwives, who may work in a variety of settings and reflect the minimum standard of statutory supervision to be achieved.

A copy of the LSA Standards for Supervision is available from www.midwife.org.uk
The LSA and Supervisors of Midwives

The supervisor of midwives is a source of sound professional advice on all midwifery matters and may provide professional advice to all practitioners, on midwifery care and practice (LSA, NMC 2008). The supervisor is accountable to the LSA for all supervisory activities and, as there is no hierarchy in supervision, each supervisor of midwives can approach the LSA Midwifery Officer for advice or support.