



Press Release

For immediate release, January 30th 2012

Two Ayrshire and Arran Midwives Win National Midwifery Award for Service Promoting Normal Birth

Two NHS Ayrshire and Arran Midwives have won one of the UK's top midwifery prizes at the Royal College of Midwives (RCM) Annual Awards, the UK's most prestigious midwifery awards, held in London on 25th January, 2012.

Midwives Donna Burns and Alison Fyfe have scooped the RCM's Award for Promoting Normal Birth.

The award was given for the midwives having a novel approach to promoting Normal Birth. The awards were held at the Connaught Rooms in Convent Garden, London. Attending the ceremony was RCM's Chief Executive Cathy Warwick and presenting the awards was the celebrity and broadcaster Natasha Kaplinsky.

Following holding its first hypnobirthing class in 2009, the midwives discovered that the majority of women attending had a fear of childbirth. To address this, the board's maternity services created an environment that promoted normal birth and helped them address their fears of child birth. Hypnobirthing is the use of hypnosis or hypnotherapy in childbirth. The use of hypnobirthing has become widely known among women and in obstetric units as an increasingly popular means of achieving a natural childbirth.

Mandy Yule, Director of Integrated Care and Partner Services, commented: "I would like to congratulate Donna and Alison on this fantastic achievement, to win a national award is something to be very proud of. Many women find childbirth a

daunting prospect, so anything we can do make this a more enjoyable experience is to be commended. Well done Donna and Alison for your innovative work which compliments our existing maternity services.”

Mothers who used the service said: “It still amazes me that I was able to face the biggest fear of my life in such a peaceful and happy state.”

Another mother said: "We had the best experience of our lives whilst using Hypnobirthing, not just during labour but throughout the whole pregnancy and even after the birth of our gorgeous baby."

Cathy Warwick, chief executive of the Royal College of Midwives, said: “This award highlights the important, innovative and pioneering work being done by Donna and Alison. I congratulate their perseverance and commitment to the profession. It is important for people to know that midwifery does not stand still. When midwives are given the resources, support and freedom to develop their work, the result is better services, better care and better outcomes for mothers, babies and their families.”

-ends-

For more information or to receive art of the award winners, contact the RCM Press Office on 020 7312 3456 or email: pressofficer@rcm.org.uk. Art of winners available on request.

For more information about the project, please contact the Communications Department at NHS Ayrshire & Arran. Tel: 01563 826111. Email: comms@aaaht.scot.nhs.uk

Notes to the Editor

The Royal College of Midwives is the voice of midwifery. We are the UK's only trade union and professional organisation led by midwives for midwives. The vast majority of the midwifery profession are our members. The RCM promotes midwifery, quality maternity services and professional standards. We support and represent our members individually and collectively in all four UK countries. We influence on behalf of our members and for the interests of the women and families for which they care. For more information visit the RCM website at www.rcm.org.uk.

The 2012 awards are the 10th Royal College of Midwives' Annual Midwifery Awards. Prizes are given across 12 categories. There is also an award for Midwife of the Year - The Johnson's baby Mums' Midwife of the Year.

About Normal Birth

The World Health Organisation describes normal or natural birth as a spontaneous labour and delivery, where an infant is born spontaneously without medical or technological help, such as where labour has been accelerated by caesarean section, or induced or by giving the mother an epidural. An infant is born in the vertex position [head down] and between 37 and 42 completed weeks of pregnancy. A normal birth is also called a natural birth or a birth without interference. Sometimes it is also called a physiological birth or straightforward vaginal birth. <http://www.rcmnormalbirth.org.uk/>

About the award-winning project: Donna Burns and Alison Fyfe, NHS Ayrshire and Arran -Midwives making a difference: a novel approach to promoting normality

- Midwives Held first hypnobirthing class in July 2009. This is not unique, however as the majority of women attending have a fear of childbirth the women themselves are. Early audit findings suggest classes are valued highly.
- For some women, their pregnancy felt traumatic, and they found it difficult to think beyond the birth, often contemplating an elective caesarean section (cs).
- This aimed to help normalise pregnancy and birth and assist women in finding coping mechanisms to deal with their fears; potentially increasing the normal birth rate in keeping with the refreshed framework for maternity services.
- During the first 12 months of the classes 35 couples attended; 22 were having their first baby: During childbirth, 23 laboured spontaneously; 4 women were medically induced because of pregnancy complications; 6 women had planned caesarean sections: 3 had a previous cs, and 3 had pregnancy complications; no women experienced a preterm birth; only 1 woman had a postdates IOL at 41 +6
- At the start of the course, all women used words like 'pain' or 'painful' to describe birth, however only 15 women (65.1%) used either no analgesia or entonox only as pain relief in labour.
- Of the 12 women who responded to the parents' questionnaire: all women described labour as comfortable to uncomfortable
- Two women described the birth as painful: one baby was born face to pubes, the other by forceps; all women felt more confident in their ability to birth, saying it was a positive experience; all said they would definitely use hypnobirthing again Analgesia used in labour and birth.
- At the start of the course, women were asked to write up to 5 words that they associated with labour and birth. Without exception, all women wrote "pain" or "painful."
- Details of the analgesia uptake for labour and birth and given below:

ANALGESIA OPTIONS	NUMBER OF WOMEN	% OF WOMEN
No Analgesia	9	41%
Water	8	36.4%
Entonox only	6	27.3%
Morphine Injection	0	0%
Patient Controlled Remifentanyl	2	9%
Epidural All primigravida (woman having her first baby) with long latent phase	4	18.2%
Spinal for forceps birth	1	4.5%

- All women in spontaneous labour had vaginal births.
- Received an abundance of qualitative data which reflected that the womens' experience of hypnobirthing was far reaching and potentially life changing.
- This is in startling contrast compared with a pregnancy of fear, potentially a caesarean section birth and a difficult start to motherhood.
- Trust will continue to audit our service and feel that some benefits are as yet undiscovered.