



Director of Midwifery

Candidate briefing pack

January 2026

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of Director of Midwifery at East Kent University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. I am delighted that you are considering joining us at such a significant and purposeful moment for our Trust and, in particular, for our Women's Health services.



At East Kent, we are clear about our purpose: to provide safe, compassionate and high-quality care for the diverse communities we serve, and to do so in a way that places women, babies and families at the heart of everything we do.

Our maternity services are currently rated Good by the Care Quality Commission, and while we are proud of this, we are not complacent. Our ambition is to continue to learn, to listen and to improve – working in genuine partnership with women, birthing people, families, staff and our Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership.

The Director of Midwifery is a pivotal role within our organisation. As the most senior midwife in the Trust, you will provide strategic and operational leadership across maternity and gynaecology services, working as part of the Women and Children's Care Group leadership quadrumvirate and reporting directly to our Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer.

This is a role that combines professional authority with visible, compassionate leadership – setting standards, shaping culture and ensuring that the voice of midwifery is strong, confident and influential at sub-board and board level.

We are seeking a leader who is not only clinically credible and professionally assured, but also deeply committed to co-production and equity. Health inequalities remain a critical challenge across East Kent, and this role has a central responsibility for ensuring that poorer outcomes are understood, addressed and reduced.

You will lead improvement and transformation in partnership with our local communities and system colleagues, ensuring that services are responsive, inclusive and grounded in evidence-based practice.

A key priority for the incoming Director of Midwifery will be to lead restorative action for families and staff following the Reading the Signals report. This work requires sensitivity, courage and integrity, and it sits alongside a broader responsibility for workforce leadership, quality governance, maternity safety initiatives and the ongoing development of our midwifery profession.

East Kent is a large, complex and rewarding health system, and this role offers the opportunity to shape maternity services not only within the Trust, but across the wider Kent and Medway system and beyond.

You will work closely with regional and national partners, contribute to policy development, and help set a long-term strategic vision that delivers safe, sustainable and compassionate care for future generations.

If you are an inspiring, resilient and values-led leader, passionate about midwifery and committed to making a meaningful difference for women, babies and families, I warmly encourage you to apply. We would be proud to welcome you to East Kent and to support you in making your mark.

If you would like to learn more, please contact Finn McNulty at our recruitment partners, Hunter Healthcare, on fmcnulty@hunter-healthcare.com or 07966 006091

With best wishes,

Sarah Hayes
Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer
East Kent University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

About us

We are one of the largest hospital trusts in England, with three acute hospitals and community sites serving a local population of around 700,000. We also provide specialist services for Kent and Medway.

We care about our patients and our people.

We are focused on providing outstanding, safe patient care, and a positive working culture that benefits staff and patients alike.

Every day we care for more than 1,000 people, from helping to bring a new born baby into the world to caring for a patient at the end of life, and at all the stages in between.

In everything we do, we want to make our staff, patients and their families feel cared for, safe, respected, included and confident we are making a difference, and provide the best possible care and treatment to every one of our patients.

We have many excellent services and dedicated, hard-working staff but we know we are not always providing the right standard of care to every patient, every day.

The importance of providing safe, kind and compassionate care, team working and listening and acting on what staff, patients and families are telling us may be obvious but we have seen all too clearly the impact when this does not happen.

We remain determined to learn from Dr Kirkup's report Reading the Signals which highlighted long-standing failures to provide safe services, high standards of clinical behaviour, team working and open and honest organisational behaviour.

We are using a nationally-recognised quality improvement programme together with a nationally renowned Culture and Leadership Programme, both of which have been shown to improve care for patients and the experience of staff in other NHS organisations.



To do this, we have set ourselves stretching, ambitious targets for what we want to achieve, together we will:

- Reduce harm and deliver safe services by developing and fostering a safety culture in which all of us respond openly and learn when things go wrong, where we involve patients and families and do everything we can to improve the conditions where our staff work and patients are treated.
- Put patient, family and community voices at the heart of everything we do. We will be open and honest when things go wrong, we will constantly seek their feedback and design services with them, and make sure they are listened to, involved and their concerns are acted upon.
- Treat our patients and each other with care and compassion at all levels across the organization, and create teams that work well together, trust, and respect each other and where people feel included.

- Work with our partners to improve patient outcomes and reduce health inequality and continuously improve by being a centre of research excellence.
- Strive constantly to reach national standards for access and outcomes in planned and emergency care and seek to deliver care in the most cost-effective way possible.

Achieving this change will take time. There is a great deal of work we need to do at every level of our organisation to provide the consistent standard of care we want for all of our patients and to improve how it feels to work here for our staff.

We also recognise the importance of acknowledging the milestones and progress that is made along the way, as together we work to transform our Trust.



Vision, mission and values

Our vision

Our vision is **to deliver great healthcare from great people.**

Our strategic themes are Quality and Safety, Patients, People, Partnerships, Sustainability and Research.

Our strategic objectives are driven by our response to Dr Kirkup's report Reading the Signals; the importance of meeting national standards for planned, cancer and emergency care and the need to be financially sustainable by providing better care and reducing waste.

We will discuss our progress against key performance indicators, and the difference it is making, in public at our public board meetings which anyone can join, visit www.ekhft.nhs.uk

Our mission

Our mission is improving health and wellbeing and our vision is to deliver great healthcare from great people.

Our values

Everything we do is underpinned by our values: People feel cared for, safe, respected and confident we are making a difference.



Our future strategy

Our future strategy

We are currently working to develop our new Trust Strategy. This will set out what our long-term future will look like and how we will continue to improve our services.

The strategy will include our current improvement work and the changes we wish to make in the future.

The key aims and priorities of the strategy will include:

- Improving patient outcomes
- Addressing health inequalities
- Delivering of sustainable, quality care

Alongside this, we are also developing our clinical, digital, workforce and estates strategies. These will underpin the Trust Strategy, and set out how these areas will be developed over the next 10 years. The strategy will also provide details of our Green Plan,

In its development, we are working with our clinical, operational, and managerial teams. We are also using feedback from patient groups and our communities.

These are a few examples of how we plan to achieve this:

- Engagement with community and patient networks
- Meetings with specialty teams and staff groups across the trust
- Engaging and collaborating with our partners across Kent.

This work will allow us to focus on:

QUALITY AND SAFETY

- Improving patient outcomes and supporting the delivery of quality improvements.

PATIENTS

- Providing services that deliver national standards
- Providing services that improve the experience for patients and families.
- Providing local services where possible; alongside centres of excellence for quality and efficiency.

PEOPLE

- Improving the experience for staff including workforce transformation and modernisation.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Working with other healthcare partners or providers to reduce health inequalities.
- Increasing opportunities to deliver services in the community wherever possible.
- Making best use of limited acute hospital space and capital funding.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Delivering services within the funding available that are sustainable long-term.
- Supporting our Green Plan including digital solutions.



Living and working in East Kent

Our three large district general hospitals, specialist units and community sites provide a vibrant and diverse working environment with the extensive opportunities and teaching facilities you would expect of a large trust.

Living and working in East Kent offers a rare blend of professional opportunity and quality of life. It is a place where ambitious, high-impact leadership sits comfortably alongside space, nature and a strong sense of community – an increasingly compelling mix for senior healthcare professionals.

East Kent's natural environment is one of its greatest assets. From the rolling landscapes of the Kent Downs to the striking coastline stretching from Thanet to the White Cliffs of Dover, the area encourages healthy, active living.

Walking, cycling, coastal swimming and open countryside are all part of everyday life, offering a natural counterbalance to the demands of senior leadership roles.

The region combines heritage with contemporary culture. Canterbury provides historic character, excellent schools and a vibrant café and arts scene, while Margate has become a nationally recognised centre for creativity, with galleries, great restaurants and a revitalised seafront.

Connectivity is another key strength. High Speed rail services link East Kent directly to London in under an hour, making national travel straightforward without the pressures of city living. Excellent road links, the Port of Dover and easy access to European routes ensure the region remains outward-facing and well connected.

Housing offers strong value for money, with options ranging from coastal properties and rural villages to lively town centres, often providing more space and flexibility than larger urban areas.

For those seeking a senior leadership role with real scope to shape services – without sacrificing wellbeing – East Kent offers an environment where professional purpose and personal life can thrive side by side.



Job description

Job title:	Director of Midwifery
Salary:	VSM (pro rata where applicable)
Care Group:	Women's Health
Base:	Trustwide
Contact:	Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer

Job summary

We are committed to continually improving the outcomes for our population, ensuring that all who use our services are at the centre of everything we do. This includes delivering the most efficient, safe and effective hospital services, through compassionate leadership and engagement with our staff and through collaborative working with partners across the integrated health and care system.

The post holder will have responsibility for the strategic and operational leadership of our Maternity and Gynaecology services as part of the care group leadership quadruprate and working at sub board level will be the most senior midwife in our Trust. They will be an inspiring, visionary and compassionate leader for the midwifery profession at East Kent and reporting directly to the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer.

Our maternity services are rated as Good by the CQC and our ambition is to continue our maternity improvement journey alongside our local community, always learning and always improving.

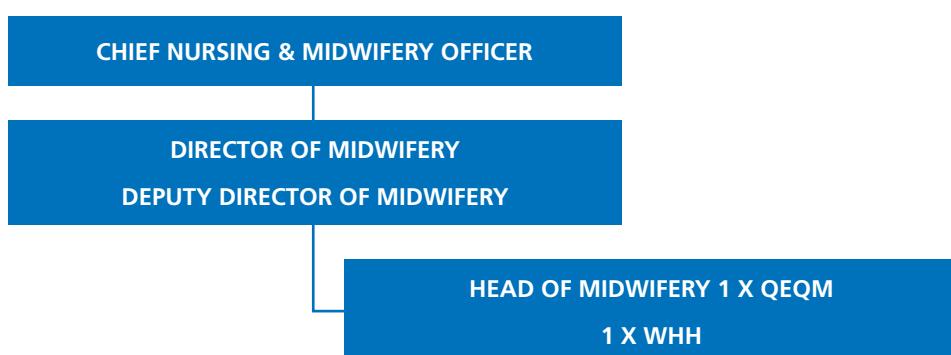
Role specific duties

Reporting to the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer, the Director of Midwifery, a practising midwife, will provide professional compassionate, inspiring and visionary leadership and strategic direction for midwifery and nursing staff within the Women and Children's Care Group. They will act as the main point of contact for strategic delivery and expertise on all matters relating to high standards of professional midwifery and gynaecology services.

The post-holder will provide leadership which engages staff, maintains patient and customer focus, drives change and high performance and demonstrates and develops own personal qualities as a leader.

Importantly they will work alongside women and families and local communities as well as our MNVP to ensure that their voices are heard and that services are adapted accordingly and co-produced. This includes ensuring that local health inequality and related poorer outcomes are understood and acted on so that the best outcomes are achieved for the women, birthing people and babies who use our services.

Organisational chart



In addition, they will lead the restorative action for families and staff implemented following the 'Reading the Signals' report.

They are responsible for effectively managing the Care Group's Midwifery and Gynaecology nursing staff and associated resources, ensuring the optimal deployment of the midwifery and nursing workforce to ensure high quality patient care is delivered and monitored.

The post holder works alongside the Clinical Director for Women's Services and Managing Director for the Women and Children's Care Group and takes the lead on midwifery and maternity service improvement and development programmes, midwifery and nurse staffing including recruitment and retention, measuring and improving standards of care and the woman and family experience.

The post holder will lead strategic and innovative midwifery developments across East Kent and contribute to a system wide approach to delivering maternity transformation. This role is pivotal to ensuring safe, timely and compassionate care.

The role involves working in partnership with other organisations across the South East and Kent and Medway regions. The post holder will develop and maintain a network of mutually beneficial relationships with local communities, NHS England and Improvement, Kent and Medway ICB, Maternity providers, Public Health England, Health Education England, Care Quality Commission, the Royal Colleges, and other key stakeholders.

This is with the aim of taking forward national policies for women across the regional and national platforms and leading the long- term strategic vision for East Kent that enables high quality and sustainable services contributing to the provision of high-quality care, improved outcomes and improved family experiences.

The Director of Midwifery is the professional lead for the group on all matters relating to midwifery, and provides advice to the Chief Nursing & Midwifery Officer, Clinical Director, Maternity Safety Champions and the Board of Directors.

The Director of Midwifery will act as the expert on midwifery and maternity issues both internally and externally and ensure that a culture of proactive professionalism is embedded and promoted, regularly presenting to Trust Board and externally and being confident to do so.

The post holder will:

- be an active member of the senior maternity and nursing teams and the Women's Care Group Leadership Team.
- be an active member of the Trust senior nursing and midwifery team.
- have a key role in influencing strategic direction for development of maternity services across the Trust and regional/ national direction and decision-making working with strategic partners.
- line manage and support the Deputy Director of Midwifery Heads of Midwifery and Consultant Midwives on the Trust sites to ensure safe standards of midwifery and gynaecological nursing care are delivered to the highest quality.
- lead a consistent and standardised approach across the Trust for the delivery and achievement of national maternity safety initiatives.
- be expected to demonstrate a highly visible, compassionate and transformational leadership style which is underpinned by the values of the Trust.
- act as a role model for all midwives and nurses at all times.
- work alongside women and birthing people, local communities and the MNVP to ensure that services are co-produced
- ensure that health inequality is recognised in maternity services and that outcomes affected by this inequality are actively monitored and robustly addressed

Key results areas:

Direct Strategic Management – Corporate/Strategic

- lead on the development of the midwifery profession through proactive involvement in local, regional and national forums and to represent the Trust on midwifery and maternity issues when required.
- establish and maintain excellent external relationships essential to the delivery of a safe and high-quality service, influencing public health, health visiting, safeguarding, social care and mental health service as key partnerships.
- interpret overall health service policy and strategy in order to establish goals and standards and coordinate the Trust's response to national maternity transformation and initiatives for midwifery and maternity services, ensuring local application.
- ensure that all statutory requirements are met and that all nurse and midwifery practice is consistent with the NMC Code.
- provide professional and operational advice and guidance at a senior level and expert advice to the Trust Board and support ward to Board oversight of maternity.
- contribute and provide professional advice to specific projects, and lead and manage designated work streams and projects as and when required.
- provide effective midwifery and maternity input into the development of maternity service improvement, transformation and the Trust's business planning cycle.
- as the most senior midwife within the Trust, develop maternity services by leading on the production and implementation of a range of Trust, national and professional strategies, priorities, statutory regulations and guidelines across both the Care Group and Trust wide as required.
- provide expertise to the maternity leadership teams in identifying drivers for change and opportunities for growing, improving and redesigning maternity services and initiating strategic implementation plans in line with LMS and national planning.

- lead the development and implementation of midwifery and maternity workforce monitoring, through the redesign of services and roles as appropriate, to provide improvements in service delivery.
- develop strategies for effective recruitment and retention of midwives and nurses and longer- term workforce plans.
- ensure close liaison with local universities to ensure educational programmes are proactive and innovative and meet the training needs of nurses and midwives.
- be actively involved in the regional/national specialty networks
- contribute to the financial stewardship for maternity services across the Care Group and maximise value for money, effectiveness and productivity.

Clinical and Professional Leadership

- establish effective, professional, multi-disciplinary relationships both within the Trust and with other organisations, actively participating in regional and national meetings as required.
- maintain an up to date understanding of developments and changes in legislation, national policy and guidance that relate to all aspects of midwifery and nursing practice, and ensure that senior Trust personnel are kept up-to-date and informed of the likely impact on Trust Services.
- translate national policy into local action.
- promote and maintain an evidence-based practice culture for midwifery and nursing staff, ensuring the creation of effective local, regional and national networks to share good practice, and be responsible for wide dissemination and implementation of evidence.
- provide professional leadership and guidance for all midwifery and nursing staff ensuring appropriate structures are in place that support midwives and nurses at all levels, and act as a role model both internally and externally.
- ensure compliance with policies, procedures and clinical guidelines.

- ensure that appropriately trained and competent midwives, nurses and nonregistered support staff deliver effective care.
- act as professional lead for the conduct of midwives and nurses, ensuring that the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer is kept informed about misconduct issues. Recognise cases outside own area of authority and/ or with wider public concern and seek advice and support from the Executive leadership team as appropriate.
- ensure all midwives and nurses comply with statutory mandatory training and registration requirements. Further ensure that Care Group staff comply with the Trust's standards for behaviour and attitude, addressing any deficiencies as required.
- promote and encourage the career development of colleagues through involvement in training, research and education.
- ensure that competent and capable midwife and nurse educators provide high quality training and education.
- be instrumental in curriculum planning working collaboratively with the providers of both pre- and post-registration education.
- lead the senior maternity and nursing team in ensuring that all midwifery and nursing staff have clear goals and objectives, regular appraisal and feedback on performance as well as personal development plans.
- develop a culture that encourages midwives and nurses to be innovative, creative and challenging in the interests of patient care and professional practice.
- be highly visible and approachable in clinical areas, and available to respond to women, relatives and the public by maintaining open and honest communication channels, this includes working clinically on a regular basis.
- support the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer, with workforce planning, professional development and clinical leadership of midwives and nurses across the Trust.
- lead on and be professionally accountable for the quality of service delivery, ensuring effective family centred care, research, training and development within the services including assisting the clinical teams and senior midwifery maternity team to minimise the risk of hospital acquired infection and acting as the care group lead for infection prevention and control.
- promote the development and maintenance of high standards of care based on current evidence and within commissioned service specification, in order that the care offered is person and family centred, sensitive and responsive to service users.
- work with the Clinical Director, site leads and senior clinicians of all disciplines, to develop the annual service objectives and support their implementation and to lead the maternity and neonatal improvement programme.
- in collaboration with the Clinical Director, ensure an effective system to annual individual performance review is in place across the Care Group, that training and development needs are identified and confirmed personal development plans support personal, Care Group and Trust objectives.

Risk Management & Clinical Governance

- lead the the compliance of the NHS Resolution Maternity Safety Incentive Scheme and recommendations of maternity Care Quality Commission Inspections, paying specific attention to the safety actions for clinical practices and workforce planning and ensuring robust documentation and evidence collection takes place for performance monitoring mechanisms to the Trust Board.
- ensure the prompt investigation of complaints and compassionate resolution of complaints relating to maternity services and across the Care Group working in partnership with multi-disciplinary colleagues. Along with the Heads of Midwifery, lead on family meetings when required. Provide assurance to the Parliamentary Ombudsman when requested.
- lead the completion of reports to the Board of Directors, commissioners and external bodies.
- monitor trends in Maternity complaints and incidents and initiate changes in practice if indicated keeping the leadership team informed and design and implementing structures to ensure compliance with policy through auditable processes and standards.

Operational Performance

- work in partnership with the Managing Director and Associate Medical Director in the ongoing identification and strategic delivery of schemes to contribute to the Cost Improvement Programmes 6 in relation to Maternity services and to ensure that all schemes are assessed for their impact on quality.
- ensure all resources are deployed to achieve the best results and value for money.
- work with the Managing Director and Associate Medical Director to ensure that Maternity service business cases are robust, identifying both the operational and financial implications of options including the management of risk and impact on other stakeholders

- lead on the operational planning and evaluation of maternity and nursing performance.
- monitor the use and efficiency of temporary staffing making recommendations on usage but ensuring safety and adherence to workforce safeguards
- ensure there is a robust communication framework within Maternity Services which engages staff at all levels, promoting involvement in decision making and the delivery of corporate and Care Group objectives.
- participate in the on-call rota, supporting staff and the service out of hours to ensure patients are cared for effectively and throughout the 24 hours/ 7-day services.
- in conjunction with the Managing Director be responsible for ensuring all service level agreements and key performance targets including waiting times and waiting list are monitored.

Your commitments

We are focused on providing outstanding, safe patient care, and a positive working culture that benefits staff and patients alike. This is why we ask you to:

- maintain the confidentiality of information about patients, staff and other health service business and adhere to data protection law
- comply with the Trust's policies and procedures, including infection prevention and control, risk management, health and safety, safeguarding children and adults, financial management and use of resources
- act at all times in accordance with the professional Codes of Conduct and Accountability relevant to your role
- participate in annual mandatory training.

We are a smoke-free Trust, and offer staff support to stop smoking.

Person specification

AM = Assessment Method; A = Application Form; I = Interview

AM = Assessment Method: A = Application Form; I = Interview		AM
QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Registered as a practising midwife and nurse with the NMC. ● Master's degree or equivalent level of academic achievement. ● Management training or evidence of equivalent competence. ● Evidence of sustained and recent personal and professional development. ● Specialist training/knowledge to doctorate or equivalent level (<i>Desirable</i>). 		AF/I
CLINICAL SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Head of Midwifery experience is essential broad range of clinical midwifery experience acquired through significant practice at a senior level. ● Significant experience of leading clinical teams and professional agendas. This includes managing many services in a complex organisation, including people and budgetary management. ● Experience of leading crossboundary projects. ● Significant experience of leading / managing clinical governance within a healthcare organisation. ● Experience of leading organisation / service change to deliver improvement. ● Experience of strategy development and implementation. ● Experience of working at a senior level across other NHS organisations/ organisational boundaries for benchmarking purposes or to identify best practice/ areas for improvement. ● Experience of developing successful networks and delivering innovation. ● A demonstrative track record or delivering initiatives to improve quality of care. ● Experience and ability in interpreting legislation. Can deliver clinical and strategic reports and recommendations. ● Experience of being a member or attendee of a board (<i>Desirable</i>). ● Previous experience as a Director of Midwifery (<i>Desirable</i>). 		AF/I

AM = Assessment Method: A = Application Form; I = Interview

AM

SKILLS	AM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership skills and ability to motivate a team, providing clinical advice to managers and staff at all levels including working with Executive Directors and senior clinicians. Strong interpersonal skills and ability to network across professional boundaries. Practical problem-solving ability. High influencing and negotiation skills to contribute to strategic direction of maternity services. Proven practice and service development skills. Demonstrable data collection, analysis and evaluation skills. Be able to manage all aspects of work including identifying training needs, conduct and capability cases of a department. Excellent communication, influencing and negotiation skills. Able to deal with extremely sensitive or contentious issues, potentially in a challenging or hostile environment. Effective implementation or change with positive and enthusiastic approaches. Ability to improve clinical quality in acute setting. Exceptional report writing and well-developed IT skills. 	AF/I
QUALIFICATIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered as a practising midwife with the NMC. Master's degree or equivalent level of academic achievement. Management training or evidence of equivalent competence. Education/mentorship qualification Evidence of sustained and recent personal and professional development. 	
PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL ATTRIBUTES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confident, inspiring and compassionate leadership skills, able to take others with them Ability to function in a multiprofessional environment Demonstrates personal resilience, self-awareness, ability to cope under pressure, support other team members and meet ambitious deadlines Self-motivated, energetic and flexible, with well-developed interpersonal skills 	



How to Apply

The closing date for applications is **22 February 2026**.

Applications should include:

- A covering letter explaining why the appointment interests you, how you meet the appointment criteria and what you specifically would bring to the post.
- A Curriculum Vitae (CV) with education and professional qualifications and full employment history. Please include daytime and evening telephone contact numbers and email addresses. The CV should include names and contact details of three referees. References will not be taken without your permission.
- A completed **Diversity Monitoring Form** and **Fit and Proper Person Monitoring Form**.

Please note that the information you provide will be treated as confidential and is for monitoring purposes only. It will not form part of the application process.

All applications should be sent to: apply@hunter-healthcare.com. All applications will be acknowledged.

For an initial conversation about this role please contact our partners at Hunter Healthcare: Finn McNulty at our recruitment partners, Hunter Healthcare, on fmcnulty@hunter-healthcare.com or 07966 006091

KEY DATES

Application closing date	22 February 2026
Shortlisting	w/c 23 February 2026
Interviews	w/c 9 March 2026

