

# Learning from women and midwives working together to improve antenatal education in NHS Ayrshire & Arran

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## Introduction

There has been a gradual decline in attendance at antenatal education classes in NHS Ayrshire & Arran and a tacit belief amongst midwives that this was because the antenatal education service, including the syllabus and administration, was not sufficiently engaging<sup>1</sup>. The aims of this project were to:

- test and evaluate the use of Experience-Based Co-Design (EBCD) to improve the antenatal education service, and
- identify and prototype ideas to improve the service.

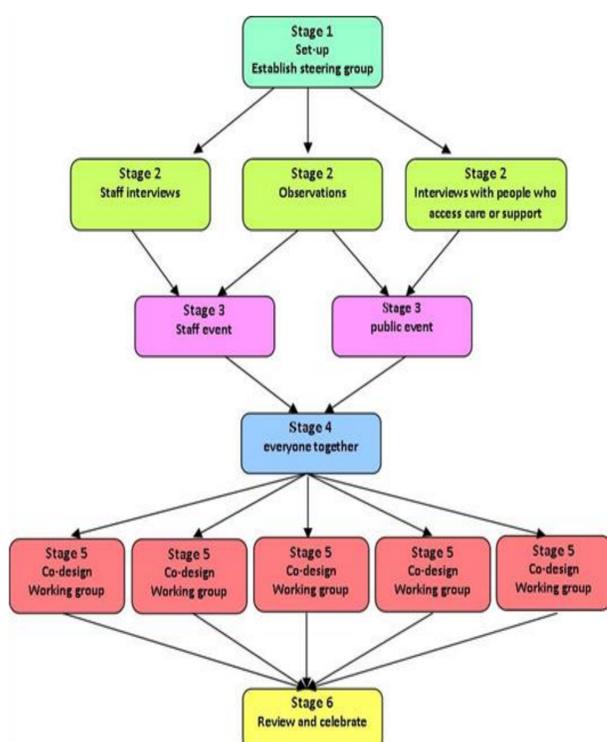


Figure 1: 6-stage approach to EBCD<sup>3</sup>

## Method

NHS Ayrshire & Arran is one of a number of national demonstrator sites that are working in partnership with Healthcare Improvement Scotland to test and evaluate EBCD. EBCD is a 6-stage approach to quality improvement (see Figure 1) that places listening to people's stories at the centre<sup>2</sup>. It explores possible areas for improvement and potential solutions, working at the pace of the people involved.

This project used interviews and non-participant observations of classes to collect data. Nine co-design group meetings were held (see Figure 2), and the 'WhatsApp' application was used, to identify and develop ideas and prototype.



Figure 2: Co-design meeting between women and midwives

## Results

- Using the EBCD approach, women and midwives worked together to identify and develop new or improved resources, including:
  - a new antenatal education booking form and electronic booking
  - new/improved information, for example an information leaflet
  - changes to content used in PowerPoint presentation to women
  - better use of social media to publicise antenatal education, and
  - purchase of new equipment for all classes.
- The use of WhatsApp was an unanticipated benefit from the project. Setting up a WhatsApp group enabled women and midwives to build relationships, keep connected and share ideas.
- The test of EBCD produced a high level of engagement, with 23 women and 25 midwives participating in the project. Participants reported a positive experience of being involved, feeling and knowing that they were really making improvements (see Figure 3).

Thank you to all the wonderful people involved in this journey. I never imagined when I spotted the flyer in my local library where it would all take me. Today I felt humbled to have played a part in this change & meet/make friends with you all. Thank you for the gorgeous flowers, such a lovely surprise 🌸

20:05



Figure 3: WhatsApp message from a participant

## Conclusions

In summary, this project successfully brought together midwives and women who had experienced the service to identify and test a range of ideas for improving NHS Ayrshire & Arran antenatal education. Further work is required to determine whether this will improve attendance rates. The project was also successful in applying EBCD in an antenatal education setting and generating learning that may be of interest to others who are considering using EBCD in their context.

### References:

1. Maternity and Children Quality Improvement Collaborative (MCQIC), Scottish Patient Safety Programme (SPSP). This project was originally supported through MCQIC.
2. The Point of Care Foundation, EBCD: Experience-based co-design toolkit (2018): [www.pointofcarefoundation.org.uk/resource/experience-based-co-design-ebcd-toolkit/](http://www.pointofcarefoundation.org.uk/resource/experience-based-co-design-ebcd-toolkit/)
3. Tsianakas V, Robert G, Maben J, Richardson A, Dale C, Griffin M, Wiseman T. Implementing patient-centred cancer care: using experience-based co-design to improve patient experience in breast and lung cancer services. PubMed Central, 2012.