

Description

Book Review: Home Birth by Anna-Marie Madeley

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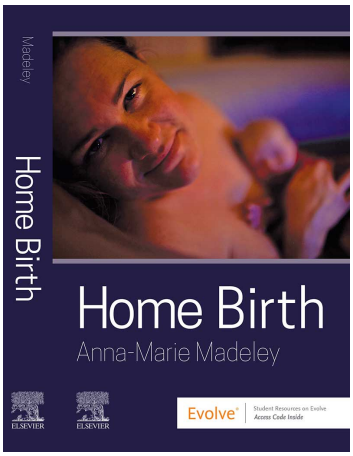

This book is a much longed-for, enriching volume that conveys safety, validation and empowerment to midwifery practice. Although not claiming to be a definitive guide, it exceeds all expectations of a practical resource for stimulating reflection and inspiring an individual, societal and organisational shift towards a flourishing and safe homebirth culture in the UK. Its title belies its comprehensive range of subjects, and its extensive purpose.

Chapters draw upon the knowledge and experience of contributors, including homebirth midwives, doulas, educators, academics, neonatal experts, paramedics and consultant midwives. The book starts with setting the context of best evidence surrounding homebirth, and develops into detailed critical discussions, advice and practical suggestions that address homebirth education, antenatal planning, freebirth, labour and postnatal care, water birth, breech birth,

collaboration with paramedics, neonatal considerations, obstetric emergencies and outside-of-guideline homebirth. Interim Practice Points and tables reiterate key concepts and summarise lists of suggestions, or contain thought-provoking questions, while bullet points lighten the density of some paragraphs. The multifaceted, multi-disciplinary and multiagency approach suggests anyone involved in childbirth care should add it to their library. The language feels inclusive and compassionate only marred by small font size and line spacing, affecting accessibility, especially for those with learning difficulties. However, drawings, algorithms, simulation and equipment images and powerful real-life homebirth pictures are embedded as visual learning aids.

The editor's ability to collate the whole homebirth scope of practice and include organisations', midwives' and service users' needs, while also creating the most exhaustive and contemporary source of homebirth evidence, make this book invaluable and unique. The homebirth educational journey ends with reflective vignettes, authentic voices of professionals and service users who have experienced homebirth in different contexts. These add authenticity and realism, reminding the reader that homebirth is a valid choice. **TPM**

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