Description

Meet the team – Emilie Janssen



Emilie Janssen, newly qualified midwife

Did you know the Editorial Board for The Student Midwife is made up entirely of student and newly qualified midwives? We commission, write and edit all of the articles that fill our wonderful journal, so we know we're bringing content that is of the most interest and use to you. Let's dive in and meet another member of the team!

This time we're talking to Emilie Janssen, Co-Editor and Podcast Lead for The Student Midwife Editorial Team and a newly qualified midwife in London.

What's your role at TSM and how long have you been involved?

I've been with The Student Midwife journal since beginning of 2023 – it's flown by! My role mostly focuses on bringing a student voice to All4Maternity's Midwifery *Life, Love and Learning Podcast*, as Podcast Lead, and managing the online student blog. I'm also a co-editor of *The Student Midwife Journal,* so I help out ad hoc with article commissioning, editing, and occasionally writing.

What's your background?

At 26, I was technically a 'mature student', which I have had both a giggle and a cry about. Midwifery is my second degree – my first was Biomedical Sciences over at St George's London, so I've always been London-based. I went to university for the first time, very unsure on what I wanted to do with my life, but knowing I ultimately wanted to work with people and I was fascinated by health. While studying, I realised I had a passion for reproductive and women's health and decided at some point in my life I'd train to be a midwife. However, I hated exams, and the thought of another three-

year degree was less than appealing! Instead, I fell into the world of healthcare PR, working to turn complex scientific research into interesting, creative campaigns for the general public. I loved it and found a passion for using social media to share complex public health information in an easy to digest way. When the pandemic hit, I realised I wanted to be doing more hands-on work, and so applied for midwifery starting September 2020. I've now just finished my degree, and I'm awaiting my results.

What are your main values that drive you?

For me, compassion has been the driving force to firstly get into a healthcare-related subject, and then into midwifery. I used to think I 'felt' things too much – I felt like I could feel the pain and joy of others, which can get overwhelming especially in our work, providing care in a moment of time tinged with so much emotion! However, I now feel this helps me provide compassionate care which makes a difference, both in placement and for myself – self-compassion and balance for student midwives is a huge passion of mine.

What's your proudest moment so far?

Finishing my midwifery degree! Delivering my 40th baby (I actually had a 41st bonus baby a few hours later due to short-staffing), getting my last proficiency signed and having my final sign off with my practice assessor – it didn't feel real until everything was handed in, and even then I was waiting for someone to tell me I'd forgotten something! Now, I'm about to start my first job as a newly qualified midwife.

What's your area of passion?

Sharing evidence-based public health information, and making this relevant for a generation of women and birthing people who have grown up using social media and digital tech. While I understand the strict social media guidelines that the NMC, RCM and most hospital trusts recommend, it feels that there is a huge tool to providing evidence-based, engaging information to a digitally native generation, which we are not utilising enough. I wrote my dissertation on how Facebook groups could add to women and birthing people's experiences of the perinatal period and found huge benefits through my research – I'm working on getting this published at the moment.

Is there anything you dislike about midwifery?

Definitely staffing! I struggled as a third-year learning how to balance workload and not feeling like I can provide the care I want to give, because there are not enough midwives to provide care. I'm hoping with experience, this will get easier.

What's the most pressing issue facing the sector?

Again, staffing! If we cannot retain midwives through proper compensation, the problem is only going to get worse as the ones who are left quit due to burnout. It's a scary place to be qualifying into!

Labour Ward, Postnatal ward or Community?

I can't choose between community care or labour ward, so I'm going to be cheeky and say Homebirth – community!

What's your one tip for student midwives?

Balance! My midwifery degree has been one big balancing act between placement, uni coursework, meal prepping for shifts, lectures, exercise for my mental health, seeing friends and family to keep sane, and downtime for myself. Make sure you make time for yourself, because you cannot pour from an empty cup.

What's for dinner tonight?

A Gousto curry! My girlfriend has recently signed us up and they're absolutely delicious.

Category

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