

Description

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International study could help shape great midwife leaders around the globe

The biggest ever international study into midwifery leadership, which could help improve the way midwife leaders are identified and trained, has been led by Coventry University.

Spearheaded by Dr Sally Pezaro from Coventry University's Research Centre for Healthcare and Communities, the study, which involved participants from 76 countries, was produced in conjunction with Nursing Now Challenge and Jhpiego, a global health non-profit and Johns Hopkins University affiliate with offices in more than 40 countries and Baltimore. It identifies the ten leadership characteristics that make for strong midwifery leaders.

> It (the study) found that being able to mediate, resilience, empathy, compassion, and a dedication to the profession were among the 10 traits needed in successful midwife leaders

Dr Pezaro said: *"Midwives make an incredible impact on people's lives every day but sadly it is widely acknowledged that investment in midwifery leadership worldwide has been low. Strong leadership in healthcare leads to increased staff satisfaction, and improved safety cultures, but conversely weak leadership in midwifery has been linked to a range of negative outcomes.*

A lack of understanding of what strong leadership looks like in the context of midwifery has been a barrier, but we hope this study will help to address this issue. Having strong, effective midwife leaders is vital and by identifying the traits needed, it will support those in the profession to both choose and become the ideal individuals to take on such roles."

Dr Pezaro is a Fellow of the Royal College of Midwives (FRCM), a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (SFHEA) and has experience working as a midwife clinically in the United Kingdom, Gambia and Ethiopia.

A total of 429 midwives and nurse-midwives took part in the study, which was supported by three recruitment webinars. It found that being able to mediate, resilience, empathy, compassion, and a dedication to the profession were among the 10 traits needed in successful midwife leaders. Others included being an evidence-based practitioner, an effective decision maker, a role model, a visionary and an advocate for both the profession and service users. In addition to identifying these leadership traits, the study also found seven enablers, which could help create environments for midwife leaders to flourish. These include having a clear professional identity, ongoing research in the profession, succession planning and increasing the societal value placed upon midwifery.

If you would like to speak to Dr Sally Pezaro about this research please email pr*******@*********ac.uk

To find out more about studying midwifery at Coventry University, visit https://www.coventry.ac.uk/course-structure/ug/hls-nhs/midwifery-bsc-hons/

Coventry University is a global, modern university with a mission of creating better futures. We were founded by entrepreneurs and industrialists in 1843 as the Coventry School of Design and we continue to work with businesses to ensure we provide job-ready graduates with the skills and creative thinking to improve their communities.

With a proud tradition of innovative teaching and learning, Coventry University is now one of the largest in the UK and has world-class campus facilities, the UK's first standalone 5G network and a digital community of learning. Our students are part of a global network that has 50,000 learners studying Coventry University degrees in more than 40 different countries and partnerships with 150 higher education providers worldwide.

Over two centuries, we have flourished in our home city and Coventry University Group now also delivers access to our range of high-quality services and partnerships through bases in London, Scarborough, Belgium, Poland, Egypt, Dubai, Singapore and Africa. From September 2023, we will be teaching students at a new campus in China in a joint institution with Communication University of China.

We have greatly increased our research capacity and capability with a focus on impactful research, delivered for and with partners to address real-world challenges and support the sustainable growth of business and communities. The depth and breadth of our rapidly growing research portfolio was validated by the latest UK research assessment, which saw us jump 22 places in the research power rankings.

We were awarded a Gold rating in the 2023 Teaching Excellence Framework, proving we deliver excellence in what students care most about – teaching, learning and achieving positive outcomes from their studies. In 2022, we were honoured with the Queen's Award for Enterprise in the category of International Trade, the UK's most prestigious business award. In recent years, we have won many awards and vastly improved our rankings in the league tables that matter to students – but what matters to us is delivering transformational change for our students, partners and communities around the world as we continue to evolve into a global education group.

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