Background

- Student midwives are expected to participate in theoretical and practice experiences during their pre-registration midwifery course to enable them to develop the professional skills they require (Midwifery 2020 2010; NMC 2009; NMC 2012).
- This includes making effective assessments of maternal well being during the postnatal period and responding appropriately utilising a range of essential midwifery skills, including clinical reasoning skills to help decide the most effective assessment method and response (NMC 2009).
- The national evidence to date highlights concerns regarding the exposure, experience and skill development of student midwives concerning postnatal care.
- However there is little detailed evidence from the perspective of student midwives (RCM 2011; Skirton et al 2012).

Research Intentions

**Aim**

- To enhance student midwives' experiences of postnatal genital tract assessment skills within the midwifery preregistration curricula.

**Objectives**

1. Critique learning opportunities within pre-registration midwifery curricula, in both university and practice setting.
2. Explore student midwives perceptions of their abilities to select and undertake a range of maternal postnatal genital tract assessments.
3. Consider factors potentially impacting upon students’ ability to engage in appropriate opportunities and experiences.
4. Identify areas for development, with the potential to enhance student experiences and satisfaction.

Research Design

- The single, instrumental case study will be employed to enable the exploration of a particular phenomena within a given context (Simons 2009; Crowe & Cresswell et al. 2011).
- The intention of single case study research is to illuminate detail and not to provide findings which are generalizable, however such findings may be transferable (Anthony and Jack 2009).
- Defining the case study helps to clarify the type of case study research and facilitates the authenticity of the research design (Baxter and Jack 2008).
- The case study in this research project involves final year student midwives at Northumbria University and their experiences of postnatal maternal genital tract assessment.
- The research design will include exploratory and explanatory elements; examining what is happening in relation to student experiences, but also how and why (Yin 2014).

Sample and Recruitment

- Purposeful sampling of final year student midwives
- All final year students (no. 55) offered the opportunity to complete a questionnaire.
- Volunteers of up to 15 students asked to undertake a semi structured narrative style interview.
- A concluding workshop involving student midwives and facilitated by the research team will provide opportunity for verification of research findings and the development of opportunities for curricula enhancement.

Data Analysis

Data workshops will be held at various points during the project and will involve all of the team members. The workshops will be used to discuss, debate, challenge and agree analysis, emerging findings and interpretations, thus bringing to bear multiple perspectives on the data and enhancing the rigor and quality of the process. This includes the involvement of student midwives, who will contribute to evaluating the developing research themes and highlight opportunities to enhance the future midwifery curricula.

Research Methods

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<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Objective 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Review of Programme</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Curricula Intentions</td>
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<td>Documentary evidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survey of all final year student midwives</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Perceptions, views, experiences of what’s happening, when and where.</td>
<td>Descriptive summary of how skills and knowledge used, and confidence levels</td>
<td>Summary of potential opportunities and barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 15 in depth semi structured narrative interviews of final year student midwives</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Perceptions, views, experiences of what’s happening, when and where.</td>
<td>Detailed and contextualised illumination of how skills and knowledge used, and confidence levels</td>
<td>Detailed and contextualised illumination of potential opportunities and barriers to appropriate and effective learning opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student midwife workshop to verify findings and highlight opportunities for enhancement</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Clarification and Verification</td>
<td>Clarification and Verification</td>
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References