

Glossary of terms

Absorption The uptake of a substance by the tissues of the body.

Accountability Taking responsibility for one's own actions and omissions.

Acupuncture Acupuncture is a form of ancient Chinese medicine in which fine needles are inserted into the skin at certain points on the body. It is a complementary therapy.

Acute otitis media Inflammation, usually due to infection of the middle ear. Symptoms include pain and high fever.

Adrenaline Hormone secreted by adrenal gland, which stimulates the sympathetic nervous system.

Advanced life support Involves measures such as endotracheal intubation, intravenous cannulation and fluid resuscitation and drug therapy which in addition to basic life support measures are aimed at resuscitating a patient in cardiac arrest.

Aetiological Relating to the causes of diseases.

Affect Refers to the experience of feeling or emotion

AFP (alpha fetoprotein) Protein that is produced by the yolk sac and liver during fetal development.

Afterpains Pain caused by uterine contractions after childbirth, especially during breastfeeding, due to release of oxytocin. More common in multiparous women.

Agonist This is a medicine which binds to a receptor and produces a specific response.

Alternative medicine An alternative medicine or therapy would be one which is used as a separate and different approach to healing, different from one which is generally accepted in Western medicine as appropriate for relieving uncomfortable symptoms of a bodily defect (for example if acupuncture is used to alleviate or cure back pain instead of 'routine' analgesia).

Amenorrhea The absence of menstruation.

Amniotomy Artificial rupture of the amniotic sac.

AND Antenatal depression

Anecdote Interesting accounts or stories of an individual's experience of something, and there are mixed views about the reliability this type of evidence.

Antagonist This is a medicine which when bound to a receptor does not produce a response; its action is to block.

Antepartum haemorrhage (APH) Bleeding from the genital tract of 500 mL or more from 24 weeks gestation and before the birth of the baby.

APG Anterior pituitary gland.

Apgar score An internationally recognised scoring system for the condition of the baby at birth which scores heart rate, respirations, muscular tone, colour and response to stimulus.

Assessment Thorough physical assessment relevant to the stage in pregnancy, labour or postnatal period to diagnose any deviations from normal. This should include vital signs such as pulse, temperature, blood pressure and respiratory rate and a thorough history. A written record of each assessment is essential for informing the next one.

Asthma Condition which involves narrowing of the bronchial airways which changes in severity over short periods of time, leads to cough, wheezing and difficulty breathing

Attribution theory A theory based on how individuals perceive and attach meaning to self or others behaviour.

Audit/clinical audit Process of evaluating quality and standards of care, using a systematic review. Aspects of structure, processes and outcomes are systematically evaluated against explicit criteria. The results of audit can be used to implement change at organisational, service, team or individual level.

Autolysis Destruction of cells through the action of own enzymes.

Barrier methods Contraceptive devices that form a barrier between the male sperm and the female reproductive system.

Basic life support Combination of rescue breaths and chest compressions necessary to maintain some circulation following cardiac arrest until more advanced methods can be instituted.

Bereavement Is the state of having experienced a loss and is often associated with the period of time following the loss.

Bioavailability This is the proportion of an administered dose which will reach the circulation unaltered, and therefore will be able to have an effect.

Biomedical Relating to both biology and medicine.

Blood-brain barrier A structure which protects the central nervous system.

Body Mass Index The weight of a person (in kilograms) divided by the square of their height (in metres), the units are therefore kg/m^2 also written as $\text{kg}\cdot\text{m}^{-2}$.

BPD Bipolar disorder

Buccal Of or relating to the mouth cavity.

Bullying Repeated offensive behaviour through vindictive, cruel, malicious or humiliating attempts to undermine an individual or group of employees.

Caesarean section Surgical operation where the baby is delivered via an incision in the abdomen.

Caput succedaneum Oedematous swelling of the scalp due to pressure during delivery.

Cardiotocograph Electronic monitoring of the fetal heart.

Carpal tunnel syndrome A combination of parasthesia (pins and needles), numbness, and pain in the fingers and hands. Often worse at night. Caused by pressure on the median nerve as it passes through the wrist.

Catecholamines Chemicals which have roles in the central nervous system and sympathetic nervous system.

CEMACH Confidential Enquiry into Maternal and Child Health

CEMD Confidential Enquiry into Maternal Deaths

Cephalhaematoma Bleeding under the periosteum (outer layer) of a skull bone.

Cervix Relating to the 'neck' of the uterus. The area below and inclusive of the cervical OS.

Childbearing The process of giving birth to children.

Chorionic villus sampling (CVS) An invasive procedure in which a sample of placental tissue is aspirated through the cervix or abdomen under ultrasound visualization.

CHRE Centre for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence

Chromosomal disorders Problems within the structure of the cell nucleus that carries the genetic information.

Class A social group which share certain financial, cultural or social characteristics.

CMACE Centre for Maternal and Child Enquiries

CMB Central Midwives Board

Collaboration To work together.

Co-morbid A medical condition that co-occurs with another

Compassion Feeling for others, with a need to alleviate suffering.

Complementary therapy A complementary medicine or therapy is used in addition to or alongside a conventional approach (for example if acupuncture is used alongside analgesia to alleviate or cure back pain).

Conception The start of pregnancy, at the fusion of the male germ cell (sperm), with the female germ cell (ovum) – fertilization – resulting in the formation of a zygote, a single cell containing its own unique genetic code.

Condom A sheath placed over the penis to prevent sperm entering the vagina during intercourse.

Conduction Heat loss to cold surfaces.

Conflict resolution Strategies which are used to try to overcome difficulties and challenges.

Congruence The ability to be authentic and genuine in relationships, acknowledging the other person.

Consanguinity A reproductive relationship between blood relations who share at least one common ancestor no more remote than a great grandparent.

Consent A client agrees to undergo a procedure after being given the relevant information in which to make a decision.

Contraception The prevention of conception.

Contraceptive ring A plastic ring inserted into the vagina that releases oestrogen and progesterone.

Contraindication A reason not to give a specific drug due to something in the patient's history.

Convection Heat loss due to cold draughts.

CQC Care Quality Commission

Craftmanship A person who is skilled.

Cranio-sacral Of or associated with both the cranium (the skull) and the sacrum (a triangular bone in the lower back formed from fused vertebrae and situated between the two hip bones of the pelvis).

Culture A lived experience within a specific group.

DBS Disclosure and Barring Service

Deep vein thrombosis Formation of a blood clot (thrombus) in one of the deep veins, usually in the leg, resulting in partial or complete obstruction of the blood flow.

Delusion A false belief or impression maintained despite being contradicted by reality or rational argument

Demography Statistical science concerned with the study of populations, using various categories such as area (local, region and national), age-group, gender and migration.

Dermatitis Inflammatory condition of the skin.

DH Department of Health

Diabetes mellitus Disorder of carbohydrate metabolism in which sugars in the body are not metabolised to produce energy.

Diaphragm A cap which fits over the external cervical os to prevent sperm passing through the cervix.

Disability A physical or mental impairment; the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

Diuresis Increased secretion of urine.

Domestic abuse Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

Down syndrome A condition resulting from a chromosomal abnormality most commonly due to the presence of three copies of chromosome 21; most likely to occur with advanced maternal age.

Drug Chemical substances which interact with biological systems.

Eclampsia A convulsive condition associated with pre-eclampsia.

Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale A measure that can be used to determine risk of postnatal depression.

EEA European Economic Area

Effacement The cervix softening, shortening and becoming thin.

Egocentrism Self-centred, focus on self

EI Emotional intelligence

EMA European Midwives Association

Emergency contraception Hormone treatment taken after intercourse to prevent pregnancy. This treatment must be taken within 72 hours of intercourse.

Empathy The ability to recognise and understand another's emotions.

Empowerment The act of someone feeling more powerful (about a specific thing) as a result of them accessing or being provided with something.

Endemic The habitual presence or frequent occurrence of a disease within a particular location, or population.

Endometritis Inflammation or infection of the endometrium.

Endometrium Inner mucous membrane lining the uterus.

Endorphin Natural pain relieving chemicals.

EPDS Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale

Epidemic Occurrence, or outbreak, of a given disease, or group of similar illnesses in a population, or region vastly exceeding usual prevalence, affecting large proportions of the population.

Epidemiology Study of the distribution of factors which determine health and disease in populations.

Epidural anaesthesia A local anaesthetic is injected into the epidural space, which suppresses sensation in the lower part of the body.

Episiotomy A surgical incision to widen the vaginal orifice.

Epithelium Layer of cells lining organs and glands.

Ethnic group A group of people with social cohesion, sharing distinctive and common features. These include physical appearance, religious affiliation, language or dialect, culture, customs, values, geographical location and ancestral origins.

Ethnicity A multifaceted quality that refers to the group to which people belong, and/or are perceived to belong, as a result of certain shared characteristics, including geographical and ancestral origins, but particularly cultural traditions and languages.

EU European Union

Evaporation Heat loss due to wet skin.

Excretion Removal out of the body.

Family Form of social grouping.

Family displays Everyday activities in which family members communicate to each other and to those around them that they are family.

Family planning Planning the number and spacing of children within the family.

Female condom A sheath placed inside the vagina to prevent sperm entering the vagina during intercourse.

Feminism View that women should have equal rights to men and that everyone is equal.

Ferguson reflex Bio feedback mechanism, caused by an increase in oxytocin due to stimulation of the cervix and lower vagina, leading to increased uterine contractions.

Fertility/fecundity The innate ability to conceive offspring.

Fibroid Benign tumours of smooth muscle tissue growing in or around the uterus.

FIL Feedback inhibitor of lactation.

First pass metabolism The amount of drug which is metabolised by the liver before reaching general circulation.

Fracture Breakage of a bone.

Fundus The part of an organ opposite or the furthest from its opening.

GAD Generalised anxiety disorder

Gamete intrafallopian transfer (GIFT) A procedure for assisting conception, suitable only for women with healthy Fallopian tubes.

Gender A socially constructed identity which is based around a person's biological sex.

Gestation The period during which a fertilized egg cell develops into a baby that is ready to be delivered; averages 266 days in humans.

Gestational hypertension New hypertension presenting after 20 weeks without significant proteinuria.

Grief Is a natural and personal response to loss and are multidimensional involving emotional, physical, behavioural, cognitive, social and spiritual aspects.

Grunting The sound of expiration when the glottis is partially closed which is associated with respiratory distress.

HADS Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale

Haematological Disorders associated with the study of blood.

Haemolysis The destruction of red blood cells.

Haemorrhoid Enlargement of the normal spongy blood-filled cushions in the wall of the anus.

Haemostasis Stopping of bleeding involving blood coagulation and contraction of damaged blood vessels.

Half life The time taken for plasma concentration to reduce by a half of its original value.

Hallucination A sensory experience of something that does not exist

Handover Communication event, when information is passed from one care giver to another.

hCG (human chorionic gonadotrophin) A hormone produced by the placenta during pregnancy. Maintains the secretion of progesterone by the corpus luteum of the ovary.

Hepatitis B or C Inflammation of the liver caused by viruses, toxic substances or immunological abnormalities.

Hierarchy System in which some people are seen as having more power or influence other others.

HIV Human immunodeficiency virus.

Holistic Focusing on the whole thing or the whole person/being.

Hormonal contraception Prescription treatments to prevent conception by means of hormones. These can be administered in the form of tablets (contraceptive pill), implants, patches, internal devices or injection.

Hormone A chemical substance which is has a specific effect on particular cells or organs, they travel around the body to the target cells or organs.

HPL Human placental lactogen.

Humility Modest estimate of own importance.

Hypercoaguable Propensity for the body to develop thrombosis.

Hyperemesis Nausea and vomiting, especially noted in early pregnancy.

Hypervolaemia Blood volume is increased.

Hypoglycaemia blood sugar below normal limits

Hypotension Abnormally low arterial blood pressure.

Hypothermia A body temperature below normal limits.

Hypothyroidism Low levels of thyroid hormone which can cause intellectual impairment if untreated.

Hypovolaemia Low circulating volume due to fluid loss commonly caused by haemorrhage.

ICM International Confederation of Midwives

Illegitimacy The status of children born out of wedlock (historically).

Immunisation The production of immunity by artificial means through administration of a vaccine or passive introduction of an immunoglobulin.

Implant A small flexible rod which remains under the skin surface and slowly releases progesterone.

Incidence The number of new cases per population at risk in a given time period

Inhalation Breathing in.

Instrumental delivery When the birth is assisted with the use of forceps or ventouse.

Integrity To act with honesty.

Intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) A technique of assisted conception. Spermatozoa are extracted and injected into the cytoplasm of the egg and implanted into the uterus.

Intramuscular Into a muscle.

Intrauterine device (IUD) A copper and plastic device which is inserted into the uterus which works by causing an increase in the white blood cells in the cervix which prevents sperm entering.

Intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR) Where a fetus has failed to achieve its growth potential, resulting in the birth of a baby whose birth weight is abnormally low in relation to gestational age.

Intrauterine insemination (IUI) Carefully washed spermatozoa are injected into the uterus through the vagina at the time of ovulation.

Intrauterine system (IUS) A T-shaped device that is placed in the uterus and releases progesterone.

Involution Physiological process of the uterus returning to be a pelvic organ.

IQ Intelligence Quotient

Ischemia Inadequate blood supply to tissues caused by blockage of the blood vessels.

Iso-immunisation The development of antibodies within an individual against antigens from another individual of the same species.

ITP Intention to practise

Jaundice Yellow discolouration of the skin and mucous membranes due to subcutaneous bilirubin deposits.

Kinship A network of relatives (kin) connected by common ancestry or marriage.

Lactational amenorrhoea method A natural method of contraception in the first 6 months following birth where breastfeeding is undertaken day and night with little or no supplementation.

Lactiferous ducts Ducts responsible for transporting milk from the alveoli lumen to the nipple opening.

Lactogenesis Production of milk by the mammary glands.

Latent phase The time when the cervix is effacing in the presence of the hormone prostaglandin.

Leadership A process of social influence, concerned with the traits and styles and behaviours of individuals that causes others to follow them.

Leukaemia Group of malignant disease; the bone marrow and other blood forming organs produce increased numbers of white blood cells.

Licensed A marketing authorisation.

Listeria Bacteria that are parasites of warm-blooded animals. Affecting many domestic and wild animals. Can be transmitted to humans by eating infected animals or their products.

LME Lead Midwife for Education

Local anaesthetic A reduction or removal of sensation in a particular area of the body.

Lochia The decidual lining of the uterus degenerates and is shed in the postpartum blood loss through the vagina.

LSA Local Supervising Authority

Macrocytic Larger than normal cells.

Macrosomia Abnormally large for gestational age.

Management The process of making things happen.

Manipulation A therapeutic intervention performed on the specific parts of the body (joints or parts of the skeletal structure).

Maternal death Death during or within a year of pregnancy.

MBRRACE – UK Mothers and Babies: Reducing the Risk through Audits and Confidential Enquiries across the UK

Mechanism of labour Manoeuvres which the fetus undertakes in order to move through the birth canal.

Meconium The first stools of a newborn baby, which are sticky and dark green, composed of cellular debris, mucus and bile pigments.

Medicines management The clinical, cost effective and safe use of medicines to ensure patients get the maximum benefit from the medicines they need, while at the same time minimising potential harm.

Mementoes Keepsakes for parents such as foot and hand prints, photographs.

MER Milk ejection reflex.

Meridians The meridian system is a belief about a path, in the body, through which life energy flows.

Meta-analysis An analysis of research from several studies on the same subject comparing and contrasting results.

Metabolism How the body gets rid of the medicine.

Microcytic Smaller than normal cells.

Micturition Act of passing urine.

MINT Midwives in Teaching

Miscarriage A spontaneous loss of a pregnancy before 20 weeks.

Morbidity The state of being diseased or unhealthy within a population

Mortality The incidence of death or the number of deaths in a population

Moulding Slight overlapping of the skull bones to facilitate passage through the birth canal.

Mourning The active and outward expression of grief and contributes to its resolution.

Multiparous A woman who has given birth more than once.

Myoepithelial cells Encourage the secretion of milk into the ductal system.

Myometrium Middle layer of the uterus.

Natural methods Methods that attempt to prevent conception by means other than contraceptive devices or drugs, e.g. male withdrawal prior to ejaculation.

Necrotising enterocolitis (NEC) Life-threatening disease affecting the bowel of the newborn during the first few weeks of life, more common in pre-term babies.

Neonatal death One that occurs within a month of birth.

Neuroendocrine Control of certain activities of the body by the nervous system and circulating hormones.

Neurological Relating to nerves or the nervous system.

NHS National Health Service

NICE National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

NICU Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

NMC Nursing and Midwifery Council

Non-pharmacological Refers to treatments with no direct effects on a specific biological target.

NSC National Screening Committee

NSPCC National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

Nuchal translucency scanning Ultrasound screening test to measure the maximum thickness of the translucency between the skin and the soft tissue overlying the cervical (neck) region of the spine of the fetus.

Nulliparous (woman) Having not yet given birth to any viable infants.

Obesity Condition in which excess fat has accumulated in the body, mostly in the subcutaneous tissues.

Obstetrics Branch of medicine that attends to the care of childbearing women during pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium, particularly concerned with deviations from the norm.

OCD Obsessive compulsive disorder

Oedema Excessive accumulation of fluid in the body tissues. It can be local because of injury or inflammation, or more general, as in heart or kidney failure which can include pre-eclampsia in pregnancy.

Off label The use of medicines outside the terms of the license.

ONS Office of National Statistics

Os Cervical opening (internal: to the uterus/ external: to the vagina).

Oxytocin A hormone produced and released by the posterior pituitary gland, which causes uterine contractions and stimulates milk flow.

Pandemic A worldwide epidemic (e.g. bubonic plague in 14th century Europe, or the AIDS pandemic).

PAPP-A Pregnancy-associated plasma protein A: a marker for Down syndrome.

Parity Term indicating the number of pregnancies a woman has had, resulting in the birth of an infant capable of survival.

Parous A woman who has given birth one or more times.

Partogram A graphical record of the progress of labour.

Paternalistic An attitude of protecting people, over whom one has authority, in a way which restricts their freedom or responsibilities.

Pathogen Parasite causing disease, usually a microorganism.

Patriarchy Society in which men are the most powerful and influential.

Perinatal The period surrounding birth, traditionally including the time from fetal viability from about 24 weeks of pregnancy up to either 7 or 28 days of life, but can be up to 2 years

Phagocytosis Digestion of bacteria and removal of pathogens.

Pharmacodynamics What the drug does to the body.

Pharmacokinetics What the body does to the drug.

Pharmacology Concerned with scientific principles which can be applied to how the body interacts with medicinal compounds (medicines) and drugs in general.

Pharmacology/pharmacological The branch of medicine and biology concerned with the study of drug action.

Phenylketonuria (PKU) A metabolic disease that untreated will cause brain damage.

Philanthropic Benevolent, humane.

Philosophy A theory or attitude that acts as a guiding principle for behaviour.

PHQ9 Patient Health Questionnaire 9

Physiological jaundice Jaundice due to immaturity of the neonatal liver and the breakdown of fetal haemoglobin which should not reach levels sufficient to cause harm in an otherwise well baby.

PIF Prolactin Inhibiting Factor.

PIN Personal Identification Number

Placenta praevia The placenta is sited in the lower segment of the uterus. Type IV placenta praevia will be situated over the internal cervical os.

Placental Relating to the placenta. An organ within the uterus by which the embryo is attached to the wall of the uterus. It links between the fetal and maternal blood systems to transfer nutrients and waste products.

Placental abruption Normally sited placenta separates either partially or wholly from the uterine wall causing haemorrhage and fetal distress. This may also be known as *abruptio placenta*.

PLF Practice Learning Facilitator

PMHP Perinatal mental health problems

PMI Perinatal mental illness

PND Postnatal depression

Post partum haemorrhage A significant blood loss from the genital tract of 500 mL or more post-birth.

Postnatal depression Depression that starts after childbirth.

Postpartum haemorrhage (PPH) Defined as blood loss from the genital tract of 500 mL or more following birth however less than 500 mL in a compromised patient (e.g. a woman with anaemia) can constitute a PPH if it causes symptoms of hypovolaemia.

PP Puerperal psychosis

PPG Posterior pituitary gland.

Pre-clinical (disease) The stage of a disease after the infected individual is not displaying clinical signs or symptoms, which will ultimately progress to clinical disease.

Pre-eclampsia New hypertension presenting after 20 weeks with significant proteinuria.

PREP Post-registration ongoing education and practice

Prevalence The proportion of cases in the population at a given time, rather than rate of occurrence of new cases

PRF Prolactin Releasing Factor.

Primiparous A woman experiencing her first pregnancy.

Progeny Offspring.

Prolactin Hormone that stimulates milk production after childbirth.

Prophylaxis Any means taken to prevent disease.

Proteolytic enzyme Digestive enzyme causing breakdown of protein.

PSA Professional Standards Authority

Psychiatric disorder A mental or behavioural pattern or anomaly that causes distress or disability, and which is not developmentally or socially normative

Psychoanalytic psychology A psychological theory based on Freudian psychology which focuses on analysing behaviour retrieved from the unconscious mind via dreams or association.

Psychological Related to the mental and emotional state of a person

PTSD Post-traumatic stress disorder

Puerperal Pertaining to the period after childbirth (the puerperium).

Puerperal infection Infection of the genital tract arising in the postnatal period.

Puerperium The six to eight week period following childbirth, during which the mother's body returns to its physiological pre-pregnant state, with the uterus returning to its normal size.

Pulmonary embolism Obstruction of the pulmonary arterial system by a thrombus that has become dislodged and travelled back through the venous return and on to the vessels in the lung.

Purple line A purple line, seen from the anal margin and extending between the buttocks.

Pyrexia Rise in body temperature above the normal.

Qualitative Research studying the 'lived experience' within its natural setting to make sense of and understand the lived phenomena and the meanings that people attribute to their experience.

Quantitative Research based on statistical analysis of data.

Race A group of people related by common descent or heredity.

Radiation Heat loss to surrounding cooler surfaces.

Randomised control trial A randomized controlled trial (RCT) is a specific type of scientific experiment. RCTs are often used to test the efficacy and/or effectiveness of various types of medical intervention within a patient population.

RCM Royal College of Midwives

RCOG Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecologists

Relaxation Natural innate protective mechanism facilitating the removal of harmful effects from stress through physiological changes that decrease heart rate, lower metabolism, decrease rate of breathing, and bring the body back into a healthier balance.

Reproductive cloning The creation of a genetically identical whole organism, which could be a plant, animal or human being.

Resilience Ability to cope with challenging situations.

Respect To give value to something.

Rhesus (Rh) factor Antigens that may or may not be present on the surface of red blood cells; people who lack the factor are Rh negative. Incompatibility between Rh negative and positive is the cause of haemolytic disease of the newborn.

Rhythm method Involves recognising the fertile and infertile times of the menstrual cycle to plan when to avoid sex and requires the monitoring of body temperature, cervical mucus and menstrual cycle length.

Role model A person who sets a good example.

Rubella German Measles – a mild highly contagious viral infection, mainly of childhood. It can cause malformations in the fetus in early pregnancy.

Severe pre-eclampsia Pre-eclampsia with severe hypertension and/or with symptoms, and/or biochemical and/or haematological impairment.

Sexual orientation General attraction a person feels towards one sex or the other (or both).

Sexuality Sexual characteristics, meanings and social practices.

Shock A syndrome of impaired tissue oxygenation and perfusion due to a variety of causes and means that the cardiovascular system fails to deliver enough oxygen and nutrients to the tissues to meet metabolic needs. The effect of shock and the associated lack of oxygen will lead to metabolic acidosis, cell swelling, necrosis, organ failure and death unless both the symptoms and cause are treated.

Shoulder dystocia cephalic vaginal delivery where additional obstetric manoeuvres are required to deliver the fetus after the head has delivered.

Sickle cell anaemia A hereditary blood disease. Production of an abnormal type of haemoglobin (red blood cells) leading to episodes of anaemia and jaundice and has no cure only able to treat symptoms.

Side effect An unwanted effect from a drug.

SIGN Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network

Skin-to-skin Baby being placed naked, skin-to-skin on mother or father immediately after birth.

SMI Serious mental illness

Social construction Social reality is the product of interactions between individuals and groups.

Social norms Rules and beliefs which members of any society are expected to adhere to.

Society A group of people connected together by a shared culture.

Sociology Scientific study of human life, social groups, whole societies and the human world.

SOM Supervisor of Midwives

Stepchild Child of a person's husband or wife from a prior marriage or prior relationship.

Sterilisation Surgical intervention to prevent conception either by preventing passage of ova from the ovaries to the uterus (tubal ligation) or by preventing sperm travelling from the testes to the penis (vasectomy).

Stillbirth is legally defined as a baby born after the 24th week of pregnancy that has not breathed or shown any sign of life.

Sub lingual Under the tongue.

Sub-clinical (disease) A disease or condition, which is not clinically apparent, and is not destined to become so.

Subcutaneous Beneath the skin.

Symphysis pubis Joint between the pubic bones of the pelvis.

Synthesis The combination of components or elements to form a connected whole.

Syphilis Sexually transmitted disease caused by bacteria entering the body through mucous membranes during sexual intercourse, resulting in the formation of lesions throughout the body.

Tachycardia Abnormal increase in the heart rate.

Team A small number of people with complementary knowledge and skills who are committed to a common purpose.

Thalassaemia A hereditary blood disease. Red blood cells cannot function normally leading to anaemia and enlargement of the spleen and abnormalities of the bone marrow.

Theories Theoretical ideas about how people grieve.

Therapeutic The dose needed to affect a clinical effect.

Thromboembolism The term that encompasses the two pathological conditions of deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism (PE).

Topical Apply directly to area being treated, skin or membrane.

Toxoplasmosis A disease in mammals and birds caused by a protozoan. Transmitted to humans through ingesting undercooked meat or contaminated by faeces of infected cats.

Transcendental meditation A technique for detaching oneself from anxiety and promoting harmony and self-realization by meditation.

Transgender People who live part or all of their lives in their preferred gender role.

Transition The physiological changes necessary for the baby to progress from intrauterine to extrauterine life.

Transitional phase Moving between one phase of labour to another.

UK United Kingdom

UKCC United Kingdom Central Council

Unlicensed When a medicine does not hold a marketing authorisation in this country.

Urinary tract The entire system of ducts and channels that conduct urine from the kidneys to the exterior. It can be susceptible to infections in pregnancy.

Uterotonic Drugs that cause contraction of the uterine muscle.

Vaccine A special preparation of antigenic (cell surface recognition molecules, which initiate immunity) material that can be used to stimulate the development of antibodies and thus confer active immunity against a specific disease or a number of diseases. Many are derived from culturing bacteria or viruses in such a way to remove their infectivity.

Varicose veins Veins that are distended, lengthened and tortuous. Superficial veins in the legs are most commonly affected.

Venous thrombo-embolic (VTE) The formation of a blood clot in a vein, which may become detached and lodged elsewhere. In pregnancy the risk of VTE is more common and can result in death.

VLE Visual learning environment

WHO World Health Organization

Zygote intrafallopian transfer (ZIFT) Following in-vitro fertilisation the zygote is introduced into the fallopian tube. Commonly used when tubes block the normal binding of the sperm and egg.