

Maternity Support Worker Advocate



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www.rcm.org.uk/mswadvocate



MSW Advocate

Maternity Support Workers (MSWs¹) play a vital role in supporting midwives to deliver quality care to babies, mothers and their families. The RCM believes that MSWs are a vital part of maternity teams across the UK and we want to make sure that the voice of MSWs is being heard in maternity workplaces. We also want to ensure that the RCM understands the needs of our MSW members so that we can support, represent and promote you effectively.



I have been an MSW Advocate for almost two years now and have worked at the same trust for nearly 14 years. I have a great relationship with my colleagues and I am well known around all departments as I visit them regularly.

Michelle Jenner
MSW at Luton and Dunstable Hospital

¹ The RCM uses the term 'MSW' to describe all those non-registered staff employed within maternity services. It is recognised that a wide range of titles are used to describe these roles across the UK including Maternity Care Assistant (MCA) and Health Care Assistant (HCA), amongst others. All RCM members are eligible for this role.

The RCM is the union of choice for MSWs and our MSW Advocates will be at the heart of all the work we do for MSW members. The Advocate role is outlined below along with details of how you can be elected by your RCM branch. We're looking forward to building a strong network of MSW Advocates, working together across the UK to promote the work of MSWs and of the RCM.

Benefits of becoming an MSW Advocate

Being an active MSW Advocate provides a brilliant opportunity for the RCM's MSW members to learn and develop in the role. As an RCM activist you will gain confidence, skills and knowledge which you can transfer to your own personal and career development.

You will be able to contribute to the changing role of the MSW and the wider maternity team, as well as gain a greater knowledge of service developments and gaining opportunities for you and your colleagues. Ultimately, you will have the satisfaction of giving a voice to MSWs in your workplace to ensure that your collective wishes are heard.

The RCM is committed to providing training and support to Advocates by developing training and resources based on the Advocates' needs. We will also provide and facilitate networking opportunities for MSW Advocates in a number of formats to ensure you have ongoing contact and peer support from your fellow Advocates.

The Advocate role will provide our MSW members with a fantastic opportunity to develop confidence and expand knowledge and skills in new areas. You will need to be a RCM member and both midwife and MSW members are eligible to be elected into the MSW Advocate role.

Role description

The RCM already has some fantastic MSW activists amongst its members and there are real advantages for you and your colleagues to get involved by becoming an MSW Advocate. To advocate means to support

and promote the interests of others and we really hope that this is what our network of Advocates will become – members who act to provide a voice for MSWs in their workplaces.

While the MSW Advocate is not a formally accredited representative role, we encourage any MSW member or Advocate to stand as an RCM Workplace Representative should they wish to. The MSW Advocate is not a standalone role and can compliment any representative role that an MSW member wishes to fulfil.

MSW Advocates will:

- Act as a spokesperson and provide peer support to MSW members.
- Work with other RCM activists in your local branch and workplace.
- Keep MSW members and other RCM colleagues informed of changes in your workplace and news and information from the RCM.
- Advise the RCM on the development of its membership offer to MSWs.
- Communicate and network with other MSW Advocates and RCM staff to share information and ideas.
- Promote the RCM as the union of choice for MSWs in their workplaces.

How to apply to become a MSW Advocate

You will need to be elected by RCM members via your local RCM Branch. Speak to your local Branch Officer or Workplace Representative for more information. You can download the MSW Advocate Election form via our website www.rcm.org.uk/maternity-support-worker-advocate and this will need to be completed after your election by your local Branch.

**The RCM is the only trade union
and professional association
dedicated to serving midwifery
and the whole midwifery team.**



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The Royal College of Midwives · 15 Mansfield Street · London W1G 9NH

For enquiries about joining the RCM call Membership Services **0300 303 0444** or email **membership@rcm.org.uk**

www.rcm.org.uk



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