A snowball sampling strategy will be employed to identify eligible women within the defined area of focus. Women will be approached through Children’s centres & local charities that work in close collaboration with women from diverse low-income backgrounds. Women will also be approached through their midwives.

Role of Midwifery
continuity of CARE in reducing health inequalities

Women who live in low-income areas are 3x times more likely to die in pregnancy compared to women living in more affluent areas. Poorer women are more likely to report negative maternity care experiences.

Midwifery Continuity of Care (MCC) models provide women from low-income backgrounds with better clinical outcomes & experiences. However, evidence is weak about the mechanisms that underpin the known benefits to women who receive MCC.

Tackling the Social Determinants of Health that impact the lives of women, like addressing women’s housing & dietary needs alongside routine midwifery care can impact health inequalities & is an under-explored area in MCC research which this study seeks to address.

This PhD research will generate a Grounded Theory to help explain how & indeed whether midwives working in an MCC model engage with & take action on the Social Determinants of Health that impact the lives of women & their babies as a way to improve birth outcomes & address health inequalities.

The research will explore the perspectives of women & midwives in specific low-income settings in Southampton.

Authors: Charlotte Clayton - PhD Researcher & Midwife, Professor Ann Hemingway, Dr Mel Hughes & Dr Stella Rawnson

Email: claytonc@bournemouth.ac.uk