



SALAMANDER TRUST

4M: My health, My choice, My child, My life, UK Perinatal Peer Mentoring Programme by, with and for Women Living with HIV ADVOCACY BRIEF EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, JULY 2018

BACKGROUND – In the UK, about 1,200 pregnancies are recorded annually among women living with HIV. Women living with HIV can encounter significant psychosocial challenges during pregnancy & early motherhood.¹ Peer support of women living with HIV during pregnancy by trained Mentor Mothers is recognised in the UK as a good standard of practice.^{2,3}

4M - stands for “My Health, My Choice, My Child, My Life”. The 4M Project, delivered by Salamander Trust, is an innovative training programme that aims to build a sustainable network of women living with HIV across the UK as Mentor Mothers: to provide peer support during this time, & to uphold their sexual & reproductive rights in relation to their peri-natal care, in line with the WHO 2017 Guideline on the SRHR of women living with HIV.⁴ In so doing, we also support women’s voluntary adherence to anti-retroviral medication, which prevents vertical transmission.

4M YEAR ONE - In 2016, the 4M programme, led by women living with HIV, successfully trained 46 women as peer Mentor Mothers, across 8 regions in the UK, using workshops which comprised training on pregnancy & HIV & a creative writing session. The programme built on previous experience of running the ‘From Pregnancy to Baby & Beyond’ programme, in & around London, supported by Positively UK.⁵

4M YEAR TWO - In 2017, our next objective was to scale-up the 4M Programme. Funded by ViiV Healthcare, 14 women living with HIV from across the UK, who had already been trained as Mentor Mothers, attended a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop. The ToT was aimed at building Mentor Mothers’ capacity to deliver the ‘pregnancy journey’ training to other women living with HIV & be recognized as qualified trainers for the pregnancy journey. Led by Angelina Namiba, five additional trainers were also engaged to deliver various aspects of the training.⁴

4MNet – At the end of this October 2017 training, the Mentor Mothers decided to form their own national network using WhatsApp, supplemented by emails when required. Called ‘4MNet’, the network of determined resilient women provides a UK-wide community forum of mutual support, information exchange and encouragement for members, so they can support other women living with HIV across the UK who may be thinking about or starting on, their own pregnancy journey, or who are diagnosed in pregnancy.⁵

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

If you are a woman living with HIV who has had your own baby: contact us about possible training opportunities.

If you are a healthcare provider: who would like to connect with trained 4M Mentor Mothers near you, please contact us.

If you are a voluntary organisation: contact us to find out who is trained in your area, or to organise a training of more 4M Mentor Mothers.

If you are a donor: we rely on donor funds and welcome your support to ensure the network sustainability. Please email us.

If you would like to be kept in touch about our progress: we can put you on an email list for further updates.

Our Email: 4MInfo@salamandertrust.net

4M Mentor Mothers Project Team

Project Design and Coordination: Angelina Namiba
Creative Writing Coordinator: Nell Osborne
Evaluation Coordinator: Longret Kwardem
Peer researchers: Fungai Murau and Mel Rattue
Graphic design: Jane Shepherd, Farai Sachikonye and Mel Rattue
Design of advocacy brief: Laura Pulteny

Steering Group Members: Dr Rageshri Dhairyawan (Chair)
Dr Shema Tariq; Professor Jane Anderson; Professor Susan Bewley; Gill Gordon; Dr Vicky Johnson; Longret Kwardem; Rebecca Mbewe; Angelina Namiba; Nell Osborne; Dr Pat Tookey; Dr Alice Welbourn; Professor Alison Wright.

1. Peters H, Francis K, Sconza R, Horn A, Peckham C, Tookey P and Thorne C. UK Mother to Child HIV Transmission Rates Continue to Decline: 2012-2014. Clinical Infectious Diseases (2016).

2. British HIV Association guidelines for the management of HIV infection in pregnant women 2012 (2014 interim review) <http://www.bhiva.org/documents/Guidelines/Pregnancy/2012/BHIVA-Pregnancy-guidelines-update-2014.pdf> (PDF)

3. National Standards of Peer Support in HIV. Positively UK, Steering Group, 2016 <http://hivpeersupport.com/>

4. WHO 2017 Consolidate Guideline on the SRHR of women living with HIV. <https://tinyurl.com/WHOSRHR2017>

5. Salamander Trust 4M: My Health, My Choice, My Child, My Life: perinatal peer mentoring project with women living with HIV <http://salamandertrust.net/project/4m-health-choice-child-life-perinatal-peer-mentoring-project-women-living-hiv/>