



FREE FROM HARM

Created by White Ribbon Alliance UK

PILOT TRAINING COURSES CASE STUDY

DECEMBER 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The pilot Free From Harm (FFH) Training Courses, an initiative by White Ribbon Alliance UK, mark a **significant advancement in addressing obstetric violence in maternity care**. These pilot courses, designed for healthcare professionals, particularly midwives, aimed to empower participants with the knowledge and tools to recognise, prevent, and counteract obstetric violence, promoting a human rights framework in maternity care.

Demonstrating remarkable success in its pilot phase, the FFH Training has received high acclaim from participants for its relevance, interactive approach, and practical application.

This case study highlights the transformative impact of the training, highlighting participant feedback, quantifiable success metrics, and plans for expansion. It serves as a compelling endorsement of the program's effectiveness, making a strong case for its widespread adoption and implementation.

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Obstetric violence, a critical issue in maternity care, is deeply rooted in a patriarchal, hierarchical, and systemically racist medical model. This form of gender-based violence diminishes the self-agency of birthing individuals and the autonomy of midwives.

Recognising the urgent need to address this, White Ribbon Alliance UK developed the Free From Harm Training Pilot Courses. These courses aim to dismantle oppressive structures within maternity care by promoting a human rights-centric approach.

The initiative focuses on empowering healthcare professionals to recognise and counteract obstetric violence, advocating for the dignity and autonomy of all individuals involved in the birthing process.

THE FREE FROM HARM PILOTS

EXPLORING NEW WAYS TO TACKLE OBSTETRIC VIOLENCE

The pilot sessions of the Free From Harm Training Course brought together a diverse group of healthcare professionals, including midwives, obstetricians, and other perinatal health experts. These dedicated individuals came with a shared goal – to address obstetric violence and promote respectful care for pregnant individuals.

The Free From Harm Training Course is structured as a comprehensive one day event, complemented by essential pre- and post-course activities. This format is designed to offer an immersive and impactful learning experience for healthcare professionals. Importantly, the course grants 7 CPD credits, recognising its educational value and contribution to professional development. This structure reflects our commitment to providing an accessible, yet thorough, educational experience that respects the time constraints of busy healthcare professionals.

As we move forward, we aim to make this training more widely accessible to healthcare workers across the perinatal field. The insights gained from the pilot sessions have been invaluable in shaping the course's content and delivery style. We are committed to creating a positive impact by empowering healthcare professionals to provide respectful care to all pregnant individuals.



PILOT COURSE OBJECTIVES

The Free From Harm Training Pilot Courses were designed with the following key objectives in mind:



UNDERSTANDING AND RECOGNISING OBSTETRIC VIOLENCE (OV)

Educate healthcare professionals, particularly midwives, to identify and effectively address OV in maternity care settings.



PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS IN MATERNITY CARE

Embed human rights principles within maternity care practices, ensuring dignified and respectful treatment of all birthing individuals and maternity workers.



EMPOWERING ADVOCATES FOR CHANGE

Equip midwives and healthcare workers with the tools and knowledge to advocate for the rights of women and birthing people, fostering a safer and more equitable maternity care environment.

MEETING THE COURSE OBJECTIVES

The Free From Harm Training Pilot Courses have effectively met their key objectives, demonstrating a significant impact in addressing obstetric violence in healthcare settings.



Understanding and recognising obstetric violence

The training successfully heightened awareness about obstetric violence as a form of gender-based violence within healthcare. Participants engaged in open dialogues and shared personal experiences, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the issue. The use of storytelling as an empathetic tool contributed significantly to their deeper understanding of OV's impacts.

"The breadth of examples of what is considered obstetric violence is far broader than most people would think."

-course participant

100% of participants agreed that the training "Fully addressed" the topic of obstetric violence, underlining the comprehensive nature of the course content.

MEETING THE COURSE OBJECTIVES

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Promoting Human Rights in Maternity Care

Throughout the course, healthcare professionals gained extensive knowledge about human rights in sexual and reproductive health. This empowerment with actionable knowledge and skills enabled them to identify and advocate for areas needing improvement in their workplaces and communities, thereby promoting respectful care practices.



“Surviving childbirth with a live baby is the bare minimum. We should be striving for more than this. I attended an excellent training last week with WRA UK. I feel it's absolutely essential for all perinatal health professionals and birth workers.”

-Midwife Marley, midwife & influencer



MEETING THE COURSE OBJECTIVES

The Free From Harm Training Pilot Courses have effectively met their key objectives, demonstrating a significant impact in addressing obstetric violence in healthcare settings.



Empowering Advocates for Change

Participants felt empowered to advocate for equitable maternity care, providing tools for effective communication and system navigation. Interactive sessions boosted confidence in promoting rights-based care, fostering a professional network dedicated to transformative change in healthcare practices, and highlighting the program's success in building advocates for women and birthing individuals' rights within the maternity care environment.

95% of participants said that they are confident in applying the knowledge and skills gained into their work ongoing.

“The realisation that fixing my own house, increasing my own self-awareness and situation, will make me a better practitioner, and that 'simple' but so strong idea is really all I need... suddenly it seems doable - a third way beyond making it a fight or giving up.” -midwife





"I cannot think of another course that I have done that has been as valuable to me as the one that we've done today. It's an absolute essential."

-Emily Darling, midwife

An impressive 90% of participants found the training content "Highly relevant" to their roles, highlighting the course's direct relevance and applicability.

An overwhelming majority, 86%, reported being "Extremely satisfied" with the overall event, and an additional 14% were "Very satisfied."



"Also very grounded in my UK/NHS/student experience, so very relatable and relevant, the scenarios, etc." -midwife



"I loved the mixture of using videos alongside Leah and Amity speaking and creating a safe space for participants to speak." -midwife

The trainers received unanimous praise for their effectiveness, with 100% of participants rating them as "Very effective."

REFLECTING UPON OUR JOURNEY

The Free From Harm Pilot Training Course's journey was characterised by shared commitment and transformative moments. The engagement of our participants, the expertise of our trainers, and our organisation's dedication to respectful care and gender equality were fundamental. The training served as a catalyst for change, empowering healthcare professionals with knowledge and a renewed sense of purpose to address obstetric violence.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Central to the pilot were the power of open dialogue and storytelling, which fostered deep connections and empathy. These narratives underscored the human aspect of obstetric care, advocating a shift towards more compassionate practices. Highlighting staff wellbeing, the course emphasised the link between provider care and effective patient advocacy, advocating for self-care as the foundation for sustainable change.

LOOKING AHEAD

The pilot's success inspires our vision to expand the FFH Training Initiative, aiming to cultivate a nationwide network of advocates for respectful care and gender equality. We are motivated to use this momentum for systemic change, advocating for policies that recognise obstetric violence as a violation of human rights. Collaborative efforts with partners and stakeholders will be essential in this journey towards extensive impact.

IN CONCLUSION

We invite you to join our mission for a healthcare system free from harm. Your stories, experiences, and advocacy are crucial in driving this change. By uniting, we can amplify our voices and ensure that every birthing individual receives dignified care.

Contact Information and Acknowledgements

For more information or to join our Free From Harm cause, contact us at:

White Ribbon Alliance UK

- Website: www.freefromharm.co.uk
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We extend our heartfelt thanks to our participants, trainers, and supporters. Your contributions are the cornerstone of our progress towards a world Free From Harm.



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