



**Jane Gill**

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### A Message from Jane Gill

Welcome to our latest update from the Moray Maternity Collaborative. I'm delighted to share how much progress has been made as we continue building a stronger, more sustainable maternity service for families in Moray.

In the past few months, we've reached some truly encouraging milestones. Our maternity team at Dr Gray's is now close to full strength - the largest and most skilled the hospital has ever had. Thanks to their dedication, more women are receiving the right care, at the right time, closer to home.

We've also introduced new services that make a real difference. From cell salvage blood transfusions during caesarean births to Scotland's first maternity specialist dietitian post, innovation is at the heart of everything we're doing. These additions mean better safety, quicker recovery, and more personalised care for local families.

The support we've received from the community continues to guide us. Our engagement sessions have been powerful and honest - your feedback is already shaping improvements.

As always, thank you for your ongoing support. Together, we're creating a maternity service that's rooted in Moray and built to last.



### Momentum Builds at Dr Gray's as Maternity Team Nears Full Strength

There's real progress to celebrate at Dr Gray's Hospital. Nearly 80% of key maternity roles are now filled, marking a major step towards the return of a full, modern consultant-led service in Moray.

This milestone was highlighted during a visit by Health Secretary Neil Gray, who toured the ward this month. He praised the local team for their energy and commitment, saying the changes already mean fewer families have to travel to Aberdeen for care.

Since the "Wish You Worked Here" campaign launched in 2023, 68 posts have been filled, from midwives and nurses to anaesthetists and obstetricians. Specialist midwives are now supporting women through complex pregnancies, early loss, postnatal mental health, and planned procedures. Elective caesarean sections resumed in April - months ahead of schedule.

Jacqui Keddie, Midwifery Lead for Moray, said:

"This now represents the largest and most skilled maternity team Moray has ever had. Their arrival is already transforming care and turning long-standing plans into day-to-day reality. We're already delivering new care, with new people, and we're not slowing down."

The latest recruitment drive saw nearly 900 expressions of interest in just six weeks. Behind that is a creative, hands-on approach, including virtual reality experiences and national events where staff shared the Moray story first-hand.

With more recruitment planned over the summer, and a local open day in the works, the future is bright.

Every new face brings us closer to a maternity service that's rooted in Moray, shaped by its people, and built to last.



### Supporting Healthy Pregnancies in Moray: Meet Gemma Findlay

Based at Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin, Gemma Findlay is breaking new ground as Scotland's first Maternity Specialist Dietitian. Covering the Moray area, she's been in post just over a year and is already making a big difference for local women and families.

With a background in diabetes care, Gemma supports women with both pre-existing diabetes and those who develop gestational diabetes during pregnancy. She runs clinics focused on everything from preconception planning to healthy eating, glucose monitoring and insulin management. Her aim is simple: healthier pregnancies and healthier babies.

"Pregnancy can be an overwhelming time," Gemma says. "I want to make it easier by giving people the tools and support they need to feel confident about their health."

Gemma's also halfway through a non-medical prescribing course. Once qualified as a supplementary prescriber, she'll be able to prescribe or adjust medications for her patients directly. That means faster, more streamlined care - and fewer appointments or delays.

The key to making it work, Gemma says, is connection. "The more connected you are, the more people you can help. Talk to your colleagues. Ask questions. It makes all the difference."

Gemma's role is a first for Scotland and a major milestone for maternity care in Moray. It's paving the way for more joined-up, specialist support - and a future where every woman has the care she needs, when she needs it.

### Community Engagement, Evolving through Involving

Over the past two months, the Maternity Collaborative Programme team has been out and about in the Moray community, meeting with local groups and families to talk about what matters most in maternity care. We've visited eight different community settings and connected with more than 70 people to share updates and hear their stories.



A key topic of conversation has been the return of planned caesarean births to Dr Gray's Hospital - a milestone many families have been waiting for. These sessions have also given women a chance to speak honestly about their experiences, helping us understand what's working well and where we need to do better.

"We've had open, thoughtful conversations," said Hannah Ronald, Community Engagement Manager. People have shared personal stories and practical suggestions. That kind of feedback is gold; it goes straight to our clinical teams to inform real change."

By meeting people where they are, we're hearing a wider range of voices and making it easier for everyone to take part. Whether it's a local parenting group or a community centre, we want to keep the dialogue going. If you'd like us to visit your group, just drop us a line at [gram.maternityengagement@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.maternityengagement@nhs.scot)

These conversations are helping shape a more responsive and inclusive maternity service. It's a step forward for families in Moray and for the future of care at Dr Gray's.





## Dr Gray's to Offer Cell Salvage Blood Transfusions for Mums

The team in Elgin is expanding its specialist maternity care with the introduction of cell salvage for mums having caesarean births. The service will be available later this summer.

Cell salvage is already used at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital for people at high risk of bleeding during birth. Now, all mums having a caesarean at Dr Gray's will benefit from it too.

NHS Grampian Consultant Anaesthetist Calum McDonald explained: "Cell salvage works by collecting blood lost during surgery, 'washing' it and then giving it back to the patient during the operation. It's a great alternative to using donated blood, has the added benefit of helping to reduce recovery times when a blood transfusion is needed, and we're pleased we will be able to offer this at Dr Gray's in the coming months."

He added: "It's a well-established technique at hospitals across the UK and it's a great step forward for our Maternity Collaborative across Elgin, Inverness and Aberdeen."

Midwifery Professional Clinical Lead Jane Raitt said: "The team is continuing to make fantastic progress in terms of developing or redeveloping their skillset, making sure families in our care have a fantastic experience of giving birth at Dr Gray's. Thank you to everyone involved in making this important service possible."

This is another meaningful step toward expanding specialist safer, more personalised maternity care in Moray.



## Welcome to the Team: Supporting Safe, Skilled Maternity Care in Moray

We're pleased to welcome Andrea Dryburgh, who joined the Maternity Collaboration in March 2025. With a wealth of experience across hospital departments, Andrea brings practical knowledge, calm leadership and a focus on safe, patient-centred care.

"I am thoroughly enjoying being part of an inclusive and committed multidisciplinary team, who have a clear focus on the safe delivery of obstetric care here in Dr Gray's Hospital," she said.

Andrea's background includes roles in medical and surgical HDU nursing, gastroenterology as a medical support nurse, and advanced practice including Non-Medical Prescribing. More recently, she's managed theatre departments in both private hospitals and NHS Radiology, covering everything from interventional radiology theatres to vascular access and outpatient support.

Since joining the team, Andrea has helped strengthen links with colleagues in Aberdeen Maternity Hospital and supported the successful rollout of planned c-sections in Elgin.

"The project has created opportunities for staff to expand their knowledge and develop their competence, aligned to their theatre and recovery skill set," she said.

This is a positive step forward in restoring and growing local maternity services.



## You're Invited: Drop-In Session with Midwives & Co.

**Tuesday 26th August, 9.30am to 1pm**  
**Toytoon, 67 High Street, Elgin**

Join us for a relaxed and informative drop-in session hosted by Midwives & Co, featuring friendly faces from the Maternity Collaborative, along with professionals from Midwifery, Perinatal Mental Health, Health Visiting, and the Family Nurse Practitioner services.

Whether you're expecting, a new parent, or simply curious, this is your chance to connect, ask questions, and find support - no booking required, just drop in!

Everyone is welcome!

Thank you for the feedback on the newsletters so far. We have reviewed all of the comments and hope to build some of the requests into this and future publications. Please keep that feedback coming.  
email: [gram.maternityengagement@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.maternityengagement@nhs.scot)