



THE MULTIPLE BIRTHS FOUNDATION



Supporting Professionals
Supporting Families

Annual Report 2008





Michael Fea

Michael Fea Chairman of Trustees

Even though multiple births are now more common, twins, triplets and more still attract enormous attention, from family and friends through to the public and not least the media. The many joys are to be greatly celebrated. Far less well publicised are the difficulties for families. Parents and children have to cope with more complex relationships and children have the additional challenges of establishing themselves as individuals, not just

one of a pair, trio or more! Raising awareness of how to support families and meet their specific needs is the core work of the MBF. With increasing pressure on NHS and public services, the specialist expertise of the MBF is needed even more as we provide a unique resource for professionals and parents.

The impact of our work is wide ranging and we are delighted that Jane Denton has been made an Honorary

Fellow of the British Fertility Society for her contribution to the field. In achieving it, Jane receives well deserved recognition for her work – and the MBF benefits from its association with her.

Funding remains challenging and we are deeply grateful to our loyal supporters but we need more resources to achieve our ambitions in making sure all multiple birth families have the care and support they need. Please help if you can.



Jane Denton

Jane Denton, Director

The last year has seen many achievements and challenges for the Multiple Births Foundation but also, sadly, the loss of Dr Elizabeth Bryan, the Founder and Director of the MBF until 1998 and then the inaugural President.

Through Elizabeth's inspiration and vision, there have been many remarkable changes in our work since the MBF was established in 1988. Firstly we have

learned a great deal about the problems and potentials of multiple birth children and the resulting challenges to their families. Secondly, we have helped to foster greater awareness of these problems among the wide range of clinical professionals involved in their care, and their need for special training and support in this field. Thirdly, we have proved able, despite our limited resources, to provide educational

opportunities and guidelines to support the training for professionals. Although there remains a great deal to be done, much has changed for the good.

Elizabeth's legacy will be far-reaching and long lasting for many reasons. She touched the lives of so many during her own career and will continue to do so as we build on her pioneering ideas and work.

With Thanks

The MBF is very grateful for the support from all those who help in many different ways.

Our thanks go to Baron Davenports Charity, The John Avins Trust, Lord Austin's Charity, Peter Stebbings Memorial Charity, Sir John Sumner's Trust, The Ratcliff Foundation, Douglas Turner Trust and the W.E.D Charitable Trust for their generous grants.

The Hammersmith Hospitals Charity Trustees have once

again provided invaluable funding and encouragement for our work with Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea Hospital.

Other personal donations have been greatly appreciated.

The loyalty and support from the members of the West London, Wandsworth, Teddington, South West London and Central London Twins Clubs who attend the MBF Prenatal Meetings

for the very popular parent panel discussion is greatly appreciated.

Infotex UK, our web design company, provide excellent on going support.

Finally, it is a great pleasure to continue our work with the staff at Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea Hospital and the rest of the Imperial NHS Trust and we thank them for their wonderful enthusiasm, encouragement and help.

The Year in Review 2008

Once again the number of UK multiple births rose to 11,726 in 2007 from 11,321 in 2006 so the need for the MBF is as great as ever.

Although multiple births bring many joys, they can be greatly diminished if the practical, emotional and financial factors which inevitably accompany having

twins or triplets overwhelm parents. Sadly the health of the children is also at greater risk, mainly due to preterm delivery and the potential disability or long term medical problems which may follow.

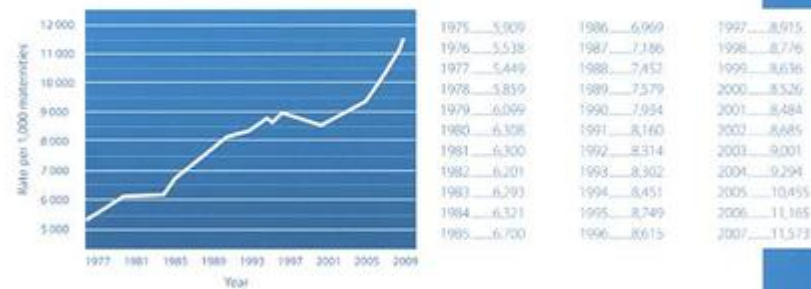
So our task is twofold: firstly, to learn more about the needs of these families and

how to meet them through research and our direct experience of supporting and caring for them, and secondly to facilitate the education and training of all health and social services professionals so that all multiple birth families have access to specialist services delivered with the expertise that they both need and deserve.

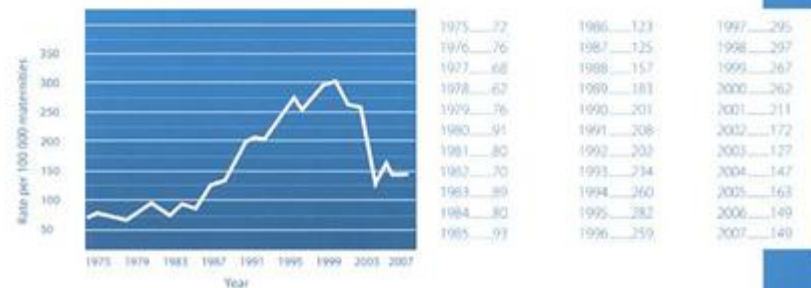


Incidence of UK Twin and Triplet Births 1975 - 2007

Incidence of UK Twin Births 1975 - 2007



Incidence of UK Triplet Births 1975 - 2007



(ONS London, GRO Northern Ireland, GRO Scotland.)

Multi-Agency Projects with which the MBF is involved

MBF and National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit Guidelines for Feeding Twins and More



Work has progressed very satisfactorily with this Big Lottery funded project, jointly carried out by the MBF and the National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit at Oxford University. Two separate publications are almost complete: one

for parents of multiples and the other for the professionals involved with their care. The publications are based on a review of the research papers relating to this subject and the expertise of the members of the Guidelines Development Group. The next task is to finalise and then disseminate the information in hard

copy and electronically, accompanied by a far-reaching campaign to publicise this important and valuable work. The MBF will be leading on this aspect of the project. Several academic papers resulting from a review of the literature and analysis of the extrapolated data will also be submitted for publication.



LOTTERY FUNDED



One at a Time



The MBF continues to be an important member of the Multiple Births Stakeholder Group consisting of professional bodies, patient groups and the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA). This group is jointly leading a strategy designed to reduce the numbers of multiple births arising from infertility treatment because of the medical risks to both mothers and babies.

Following the report *One Child at a Time. Reducing multiple births after IVF* which clearly sets out the medical risks to both mothers and babies, the HFEA has developed a new policy in association with patient and professional bodies to progressively reduce multiple births. The services of the MBF are available to staff in infertility clinics who would like to discuss any of the issues involved

or who request help in providing written information for patients.

A new website, www.oneatime.org.uk, designed to provide information for both parents and professionals and to educate the public about the risks of a multiple pregnancy, is now up and running and frequently updated. Jane Denton chairs the Editorial Board for the website.



www.oneatime.org.uk

MBF Services

Prenatal Evening Meetings

The end of 2008 saw the establishment of a new Acute Hospital Trust combining the Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust (which already includes Hammersmith, Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea and Charing Cross Hospitals) with the St Mary's Hospital NHS Trust. This arrangement has involved merging the maternity services provided by Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea and St Mary's Hospitals which presents the MBF with challenging opportunities in providing support over both sites. Jane Denton is in close communication with senior managers in the new Trust about the best ways to support staff and families. In the meantime, work is continuing at QCCH to refine the model for the highest standards of professional

care for women with a multiple pregnancy.

Margie Davies, the MBF Midwife (who has now been working with the Foundation for 16 years!) continues to visit the wards at Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital (QCCH), providing valued support to new mothers and staff alike. Jane Denton and Margie Davies work with Helga Everard, the Specialist Multiple Births Midwife at QCCH, in developing her role and helping to improve services for QCCH families still further.

The MBF Prenatal Evening meetings are held regularly at Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea Hospital and continue to be very well attended by expectant parents, their relatives and friends. An

average of about 50 people attend each Prenatal Meeting. One of the most popular aspects of the evening is the panel discussion with representatives from local Twins Clubs who continue to offer an invaluable service by giving first hand advice and information about the realities of twin and triplet parenthood. We are enormously grateful to them. Professional observers are welcomed and over the past year the MBF has advised and supported several midwives with establishing antenatal education classes as part of their local services.

In 2009 we are planning a survey of those attending the MBF Prenatal Meeting to assess how well we are meeting their needs.



MBF Clinics

The MBF health visitor, Rosie Ticciati, continues to provide an exceptional service at the specialist MBF Twins Clinics which take place in the Paediatric Outpatient department at Queen Charlotte's &

Chelsea Hospital. All parents with babies born at QCCH are invited to attend and the take up is about 75%. While parents are almost always thrilled by the arrival of their babies, there are many practical

and emotional difficulties involved in caring for twins and more and Rosie is able to offer advice and reassurance on a range of issues, based on many years of experience at the MBF.



Other projects

The MBF has long standing links with the North East of England, not least through Sandra Bosman, Specialist Midwife for Multiples, a much celebrated midwife who runs the specialist antenatal clinic at the Royal Victoria Infirmary. Pioneering work is under way through the Northern Multiple Pregnancy Register Steering Group as it has set standards

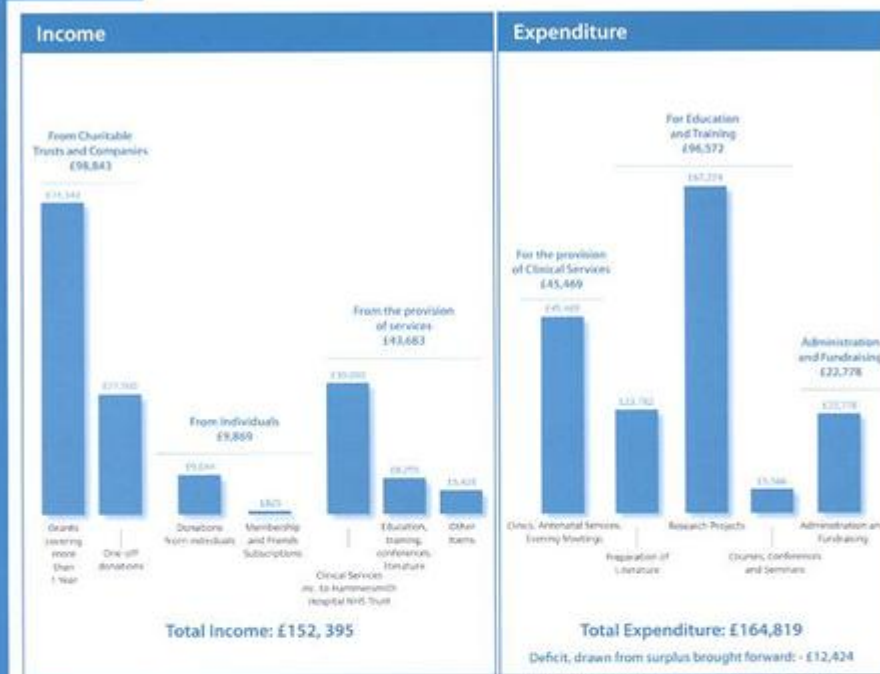
for the management of multiple pregnancies in the whole region. A workshop is planned in 2009 to look at the implementation of these standards. This exciting project should prove to be a model that could be adapted to suit other regions in the UK.

Following on from the publication *Screening for*

Down's syndrome in Multiple Pregnancy, it is evident from enquiries to the MBF that more information would be helpful for professionals about how to support parents when a high risk of Down's Syndrome in one or more babies is indicated by a screening test. A workshop in the West Midlands is planned for 2009 to address this complex situation.



Financial Information



This financial information is an extract from the financial accounts of the Multiple Births Foundation for the period 1st September 2007 to 31st August 2008.

Membership

Only £15 per year

The number of new MBF members is steadily increasing. We are delighted to welcome new professionals and parents.

For only £15 per annum, members receive the Annual Report, and a newsletter

(twice yearly) with news of MBF activities, book reviews, latest research and fundraising events.

Details of how to join are available on the website at www.multiplebirths.org.uk



Donations and Gift Aid

As with almost every charity, the current financial situation nationally is making it even more difficult to raise the funds the MBF needs both to continue its existing work and to undertake yet more exciting research projects. Your help and support could be crucial in ensuring that the services of the MBF continue. Donations

can be made very easily through our website at www.multiplebirths.org.uk. The MBF is also registered for the Gift Aid Scheme, which means that for every pound you give we can claim an extra 28 pence from the Inland Revenue. Please make sure that you fill in one of our Gift Aid forms – you only need to do it once.*

** To qualify for Gift Aid, what you pay in income tax or capital gains must at least equal the amount we will claim in the next tax year. If you pay a higher rate you can claim further relief in your Self-Assessment return.*



MBF Staff

- Jane Denton CBE FRCN RGN RN - Director
- Margie Davies RGN RN - Midwifery Liaison Officer
- Rosie Ticciati RGN HV - Health Visitor & Counsellor
- Lisa Clifford and Juliet Cassidy - Administrators



President

(until February 2008)
Dr Elizabeth Bryan MD, FRCP, FRCPCH



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- Countess Mountbatten of Burma CBE
- Lord Naren Patel
- Sir Adam Ridley
- Mrs Susan Whitfield

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- Mr Michael Fea - Chairman
- Mr Nick Alun-Jones
- Mrs Faith Hallett
- Ms Sarah Hamilton-Fairley
- Lady (Biddy) Ridley



THE MULTIPLE BIRTHS FOUNDATION



Supporting Professionals
Supporting Families



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For the latest information visit:
www.multiplebirths.org.uk