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Ways the NBO Transforms Midwifery Practice

The Newborn Behavioural Observations (NBO) system

1. From Checklists to Connection



Using the NBO helps midwives shift from task-based care to meaningful, relationship-centred practice. By slowing down and tuning in, everyday assessments become moments to connect, listen, and build trust with families.

"What's so amazing about it [The NBO] is that it's a real step away from tick list exercises – those routine clinical assessments. The NBO offers us, as midwives, the opportunity to slow down, connect, and build a relationship with parents".

2. Deepening Understanding of Newborns



The NBO gives midwives a deeper understanding of newborns, helping them see each baby as a unique and competent communicator. This equips midwives to support parents in recognising cues, responding confidently, and promoting their baby's wellbeing and communication from birth.

"The NBO training gave me the knowledge, tools, and confidence to see the baby more holistically and to help families understand that their baby can communicate with them in a sophisticated way."

3. Reframing Concerns, Building Confidence



The NBO helps midwives reframe common parental concerns, turning anxiety into understanding and confidence. By affirming parents and interpreting babies' cues, midwives strengthen parental self-efficacy, support coping strategies, and leave families assured about their baby's wellbeing.

"The NBO has given me the opportunity to have a greater impact on parental confidence, helping parents understand their baby, respond effectively, and feel reassured that there is nothing 'wrong'."

4. Promoting Early Protective Relationships



The NBO equips midwives to take a strength-based approach, promoting early relational protection and infant mental health. By offering both universal guidance and targeted support for vulnerable families, midwives help strengthen early protective factors and reduce inequalities from birth.

"The NBO helps midwives support early relationships, showing that poor attachment is not inevitable and that positive change is always possible."

5. A Fuller Vision of Midwifery



The NBO transforms how midwives see their role, strengthening competence and professional fulfilment. Midwives integrate the NBO across care, enriching their interactions, and embedding strength-based practice throughout the maternity pathway.

"The NBO is a transformative experience that deepens confidence, connection, and professional fulfilment—once you've learnt it, you can't go back. We weave it into every aspect of our practice, antenatal to postnatal."