

# Hidden Voices of Maternity

Parents With Learning Disabilities Speak Out

Ladder of Power

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## Ladder of Power



Social Worker

**Social worker** was always at the top: Most parents had a bad experience “as they have the power to take your children off you”.

Hospital Midwife

**Hospital midwife** can be very impactful and in terms of power was often above the Consultant. Feedback was very mixed.

Health Visitor

**Health Visitor** was mixed – some felt they were very powerful others less so. At times they were very helpful, for others they were not so positive.

Obstetrician

**Obstetrician** were rarely reported to be involved but when they were they were quite powerful. The different kinds of Consultants were not understood.

Community Midwife

**Community midwife** was seen as more powerful than the GP- partly because “*they actually come into the home to check you*”.

Receptionist

**Receptionist** was more powerful than the GP – they are the gatekeeper to whether you get an appointment or not.

GP

**GPs** “*do not have the power to take children away but do make important decisions*”.

Nurse in GP

**Nurse in GP** – parents like to be seen by the same person “*it really matters if they are not the same person*”.

Advocate

Mum with learning disability

**Advocate** – the advocate was seen as hugely supportive. For some they wanted “*more advocacy before having the baby – it can be very scary*”.

**Mum with learning disability** was at the bottom, “*the mother should have the most power – she should have a voice*”.

Dad with learning disability

**Dad with learning disability** was usually right at the bottom as they “*do not get a say*”. The exception was where the relationship was abusive or the Dad was manipulative in other ways.