



## ASSOCIATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN THE MATERNITY SERVICES

5 Ann's Court, Grove Road, Surbiton, Surrey, KT6 4BE

Tel: 020 8390 9534 email: [chair@aims.org.uk](mailto:chair@aims.org.uk)

[www.aims.org.uk](http://www.aims.org.uk)

**PRESS RELEASE: immediate**

15<sup>th</sup> November, 2013

### **NMC TAKES 6 YEARS TO FIND A MIDWIFE NOT GUILTY**

The NMC Conduct and Competence Committee meeting, on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2013, found midwife Julia Duthie's fitness to practise was not impaired by her misconduct. After being illegally suspended in September 2007 by an LSA Midwifery Officer, Val Beale, Julia Duthie has finally been exonerated by the Nursing and Midwifery Council.

This hearing follows her being struck off the register by an NMC hearing in March 2011 and then reinstated following a High Court appeal in 2012. The judge overturned the NMC's findings, but ordered that three allegations of misconduct should be reconsidered by the NMC.

These charges were: that she failed to inform her supervising midwife that Mrs A was reluctant to have a vaginal examination; that she failed to convey the estimated fetal weight of 4.66kg; and that she failed to inform the ambulance service of a woman in labour who may need transporting to hospital.

The Committee ruled that Julia Duthie was guilty of misconduct on one of the charges only –that she failed to inform her supervisor of the estimated fetal weight, but her practise was not impaired.

Professor Paul Lewis, in his evidence to the Committee said: *'I don't doubt that Julia Duthie could have shared this information with her colleague and the Supervisor of Midwives, Carol Axon, but equally, they should have recognised that this parameter was important and in not asking the relevant question, are in many respects equally at fault for not considering the fetal weight into their considerations and plan of care.'*

AIMS welcomes the finding but Beverley Beech, Hon Chair of AIMS said: *'It is a disgrace that this has taken 6 years to resolve. Had the local Supervisors of Midwives, Carol Axon, and Val Beale (the LSA Midwifery Officer) done their jobs properly this would have been dealt with locally. This case reveals yet another failure of supervision.'*

AIMS is concerned about the number of women-centred skilled midwives with unblemished records who have appeared before the NMC only, eventually, to be exonerated after years of prevarication and stress.

Nadine Edwards, Vice-Chair of AIMS said *'The toll this has taken on their health, wellbeing, income, and reputation cannot be underestimated.'*

This is yet another example of the NMC not being fit for purpose.

---

For further information contact Beverley Lawrence Beech.

Tel: 020 8390 9534 email: [chair@aims.org.uk](mailto:chair@aims.org.uk)