

GLOW Conference 2013

at the
University of Birmingham

Evaluation and Feedback

Background / Overview

The second Global Women's (GLOW) Research Society Conference was developed and delivered by its Steering Committee: Arri Coomarasamy, Wendy Graham, Julia Hussein, Tina Lavender, Joy Lawn, Gwyneth Lewis, Carol Porter, Abi Smith and Andrew Weeks. Bringing together more than 140 academic scientists, healthcare practitioners, non-governmental volunteers and policymakers in the field of maternal health, the purpose of the event was to disseminate new understandings, to share best practice and to facilitate research collaborations to save mothers' lives internationally.

This report summarises the feedback received from participants in the GLOW event.

Structure and Participation

The GLOW event was held in the Great Hall of the University of Birmingham on 1st November 2013. The conference was hosted by Arri Coomarasamy for Ammalife and the University of Birmingham, with other members of the Steering Committee to chair thematic contents. It was attended by over 140 people, representing institutions and interests from across the world.

Four keynote speeches were divided between thematic assemblies interspersed with breaks for refreshments and networking; Wendy Graham drew attention to the importance of looking and working beyond Millennium Development Goals (on behalf of Carole Presern); Charlotte Warren presented the topic of compassionate and respectful patient care; and Lesley Regan and Janine Stockdale offered insights into the strategies of our leading professional organisations in the field of pregnancy and childbirth. The keynote speeches were accompanied by presentations from selected poster authors. During the afternoon practical discussions and parallel workshops enabled participants to examine our nominated subjects of working abroad, health partnerships, maternal mortality and maternal morbidity.

62 poster abstracts were received in advance of the event and 57 posters were displayed at the venue – with time allocated for viewing during breaks for refreshments – and listed for further reference in books of abstracts provided to all the attendees.

The full programme is indicated overleaf.

Evaluation Method

Delegates were encouraged to contribute their views and opinions during the conference, and to complete the brief evaluation form within each delegate pack prior to leaving.

Evaluation Response

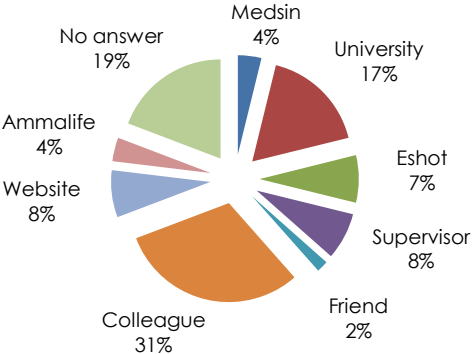
Following the event, 52 of the 141 attendees on the day completed all or part of the evaluation form, to realise an overall response rate of 37%. The following discussion of feedback predicates a representative result.

Conference Programme		
9:00	9:20	Tea and Coffee (Registration)
9:20	9:30	Welcome and Introduction (Arri Coomarasamy)
Session 1		Global Women's Health: An Overview <i>Chair: Andrew Weeks</i>
9:30	10:00	Carole Presern Beyond Millennium Development Goals
10:00	10:20	Gwyneth Lewis - Why did Mrs X die?
10:20	10:35	Ioannis Gallos - Carbetocin versus Oxytocin for Prevention of Postpartum Haemorrhage: A Randomised Controlled Trial
10:35	10:50	Bharati Sharma - How Did an "Appreciative Inquiry" Intervention to Improve Infection Control in Maternity Care Work? A Qualitative Study in India
10:50	11:15	Tea and Coffee
Session 2		Respectful Care <i>Chair: Gwyneth Lewis</i>
11:15	11:45	Charlotte Warren Sociology of Pregnancy, Childbirth and Respectful Care
11:45	12:00	Rachel Arnold - Afghan Women: A Qualitative Study of the Culture of Care in an Afghan Maternity Hospital
12:00	12:15	Caitlin Shannon - Birth Preparedness, Care-Seeking and Perinatal Survival: A Prospective Cohort Study in the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana
12:15	12:35	Slideshow Poster Presentation 5 3-Minute Presentations
12:35	14:05	LUNCH (Poster Viewing)
Session 3		RCOG and RCM Strategy for Global Women's Health <i>Chair: Julia Hussein</i>
14:05	14:15	Lesley Regan - Strategy to Make a Difference in Global Women's Health
14:15	14:25	Janine Stockdale - RCM Strategy to Make a Difference in Global Women's Health
14:25	14:40	James Ditai - On the Trial of Misoprostol in the Community: A Secondary Analysis of a Placebo-Controlled Trial of Self-Administered Misoprostol for the Prevention of Postpartum Haemorrhage in Ugandan Home Births
14:40	14:55	Yadira Roggeveen - The Visual Sisterhood Method by Illiterate Maasai Traditional Birth Attendants; A Pilot Study
14:55	15:20	Tea and Coffee
Session 4		Workshops
15:20	16:40	Gaynor MacLean - Working Abroad: Opportunities and Challenges
		Andrew Weeks - Developing Hospital Links: How can we make clinical links appropriate and effective?
		Julia Hussein and Wendy Graham - What's new? Approaches to Understanding Maternal Mortality and Improving Care
		Veronique Filippi - The Burden of Maternal Morbidity
16:40	16:50	CLOSE (Wendy Graham)

Evaluation Results

How did you hear about the GLOW conference?

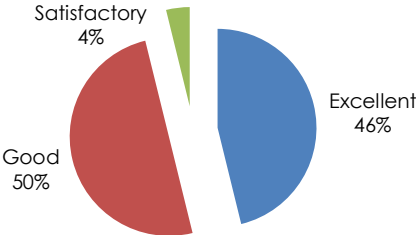
Most of our delegates were attracted to the event by fellow researchers and clinical practitioners (41% from colleagues, friends and supervisors combined). These personal, word-of-mouth recommendations were invaluable to ensure the confidence of our audience in the GLOW project. Similarly, advertisements via trusted institutions such as home universities and Medsin (combined 21%) were effective.



What did you think about our keynote lectures?

Beyond Millennium Development Goals

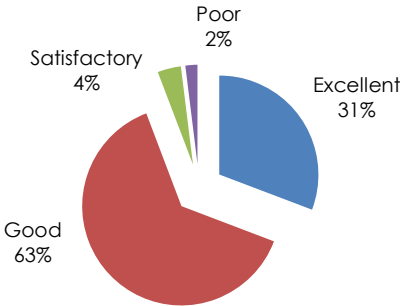
Our opening keynote lecture was delivered by Wendy Graham, presenting the topic of "Beyond Millennium Development Goals". More than 95% of our delegates considered the speech to be "good" or "excellent" (with almost half - 46% - awarding the "excellent" rating). This achievement is particularly noteworthy in consideration of the minimal advance preparation time for Professor Graham to gain familiarity with the resources kindly provided by Carole Presern (and team) when (as a result of travel difficulties) she suddenly became unable to join the GLOW conference in person.



Individual comments about the lecture included "very good context for the day... really informative, raising the concerns and reflecting on them... well presented... the slides were very informative... a detailed presentation with great direction and focus beyond 2015... very interesting and thought-provoking... good thinking points for development and women's health... fantastic... thought-provoking... rousing... inspiring... very passionate speaker... inspirational...".

Sociology of Pregnancy and Childbirth and Respectful Care

Our talk from Charlotte Warren about the "Sociology of Pregnancy and Childbirth and Respectful Care" was also well received, with 94% of attendees rating the speech as "good" or "excellent". Individual comments about the lecture demonstrated a positive and thoughtful response to the contents, despite some opportunities observed for minor improvements in delivery. Descriptions included "fantastic... detailed and descriptive... novel and timely... useful... interesting... refreshing to have a non-medical focus... not easy to hear some of this... good but less sparkly... chaotic presentation or nervous presenter..."

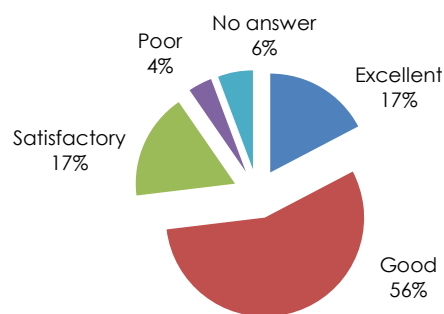


RCOG Strategy to Make a Difference in Global Women's Health

Unfortunately we did not collect sufficient data to be able to propose any generalised reactions to our presentation about "RCOG Strategy to Make a Difference in Global Women's Health" delivered by Lesley Regan, but all the delegates who offered any feedback about this talk awarded a "good" or "excellent" rating and one attendee mentioned a particular appreciation for human rights coverage.

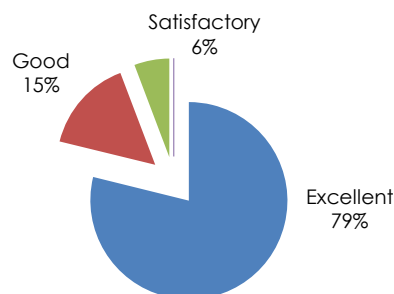
RCM Strategy to Make a Difference in Global Women's Health

The response to a strategic analysis from Janine Stockdale ("RCM Strategy to Make a Difference in Global Women's Health") was slightly more mixed but nevertheless generally encouraging and constructive. More than half of the conference delegates considered the lecture to be "good". Comments ranged between "excellent... loved RCM presentation... clear and powerful communication of strategy... inspirational... making a difference was explained in practical real terms - with punch!" to "too vague to be useful... more emphasis on how to become involved via other career paths would be better... where was the strategy?".



What did you think about our video?

"Why Did Mrs X Die?" was tremendously popular among nearly everybody who participated in the GLOW conference. 79% of the delegates considered the video to be "excellent" and most individual comments were strewn with fervent praise such as "very powerful, with long-lasting impact... thought-provoking... excellent... inspiring... loved it... very creative way of disseminating information... brilliant visual aid for summarising the issues... touching... great blend of information and the affective... wonderful that this has been remade..."



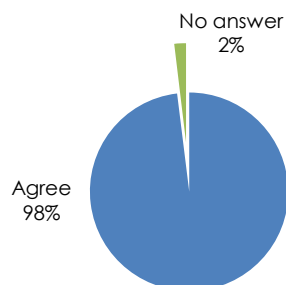
One delegate commented that the story offered "nothing on solutions" and another observed that "a lot of people in a room of maternal health experts have already seen this video several times before" but all the other feedback was completely positive.

What did you think about our posters?

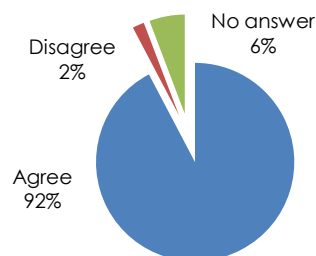
A large proportion of our conference delegates were similarly enthusiastic about any opportunities to browse new research findings through the posters contributed by fellow attendees. 98% of our feedback respondents agreed that "overall, I enjoyed the posters" and 92% advised "the posters were relevant to my research and/or practice". Several comments indicated the value of our poster activities in encouraging introductions and interactions between previously unfamiliar research groups. Numerous others included requests to expand poster opportunities at the next GLOW event.

Prizes (book tokens) were awarded to submissions selected by Richard Lilford (formerly a Consultant and Head of Department in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, now Professor of Clinical Epidemiology, Vice-dean for Applied Health Research and Director of the Primary Care Clinical Trials Unit at the University of Birmingham).

"Overall, I enjoyed the posters"



"Overall, the posters were relevant to my research and/or practice"



The winners (in no particular order) were:

- Lori McDougall and Hannah Blencowe
15 million babies "born too soon" – parents, professional groups and politicians amplify the impact of the data.
- Haileselassie Kassahune and Mary McCauley
The need for an increase in the awareness of Menstruation Hygiene Management (MHM) in order to promote young women's reproductive health in Ethiopia.
- Sheetal Sharma
Getting women to care in Nepal: A difference-in-difference analysis of a health intervention.

Comments from other delegates included: "very informative... lots of variety... wide-ranging... very varied... a wealth of knowledge... fantastic range of topics... interesting to see the breadth of other people's research... lots of institutions displayed... delighted by the range... so many to digest - not enough time... very topical research with a focus on LMIC... absolutely relevant to my practice and areas of future research... even the less relevant posters were often very interesting..."

It is encouraging to observe such a positive response, whilst recognising potential areas of concern such as over-representation of any particular location or topic, and venue layout (demonstrated by reflections that "[the posters were]...quite Africa-focused... my area of interest is neonatal healthcare and feeding so I would have liked more on this... layout meant some posters were overlooked...").

What did you think about our workshops?

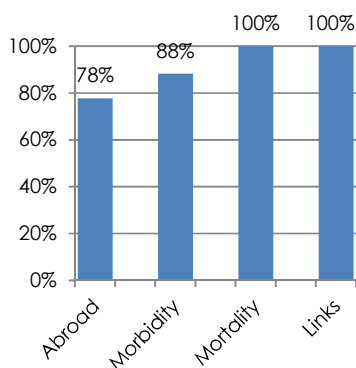
Among our respondents, our workshops with a focus on the key GLOW topics of "maternal mortality" and "maternal morbidity" appealed to twice as many delegates as the more vocational workshops on working abroad and making links with collaborators.

All the delegates who evaluated our workshop on working abroad reported enjoyment of the session, and agreed that the level of assumed prior knowledge of the subject was appropriate. 89% of these attendees also agreed that the contents were relevant to their research and/or practice. The activities were built around a board game that was generally popular and agreed to be practical and interactive (78%). Most of the individual comments about the workshop commended the session (with descriptions such as "fantastic" and "great") but a couple of early career researchers were slightly disappointed that "I was expecting more coverage of how to approach institutions to gain experience abroad" so "perhaps more about opportunities for students and junior doctors would be better".

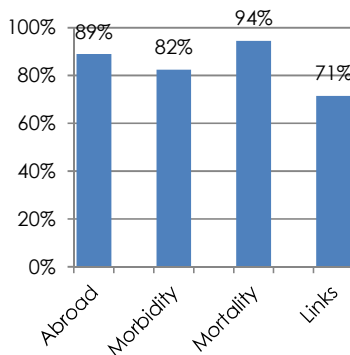
All the respondents who participated in our workshop on making links enjoyed the session, and agreed that the activities were practical and interactive, but (as above) some of the junior attendees mentioned that tailoring to delegates with little previous experience could be helpful to further improve it. Comments included "it felt like we were expected to know how to make links already" and "should have explained why they exist and benefits". 29% of the attendees did not feel the workshop was either relevant or targeted to an appropriate level.

Our workshop on maternal mortality became the most popular of all our parallel sessions. All the respondents who participated in this event reported a real enjoyment and agreed that the activities were practical and interactive. Comments included "innovative... very useful technique as well as widening ways of measuring... great Pecha Kuca format... great to get people talking and generate ideas... made some of the presentations clearer." The only area mentioned for improvement (by a minority 6% of the attendees) was the level of assumed prior knowledge of the subject (too low). The delegates were eager to deepen their understandings further, beyond our introductory workshop materials.

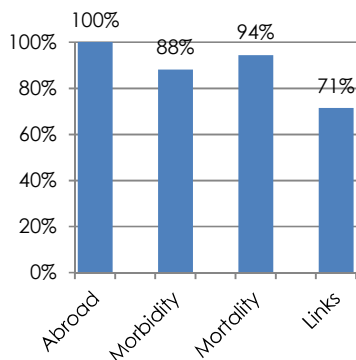
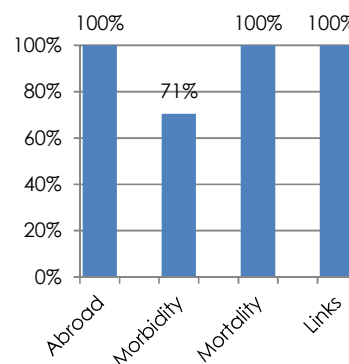
"The workshop I attended was practical and interactive"



"The workshop was relevant to my research and/or practice"



"I enjoyed the workshop I attended"

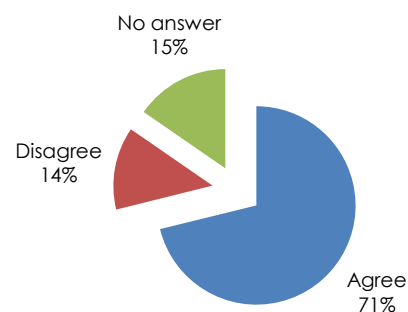


"The level of assumed prior knowledge was about right"

Our workshop on maternal morbidity gained a high attendance but also drew most of the negative comments submitted about our parallel sessions, chiefly as a result of a mismatch between our venue facilities (all the workshops within the same room) and the method of subject delivery. Group activities such as presenting and debating were generally commended as interactive, but agreed to be better suited to a quieter breakout space. Comments such as "the amount of background noise made it very difficult to follow... difficult to hear all the speakers... facilitators tried but too noisy" were recurrent within our feedback forms. Some of the participants advised that the acoustic difficulties inhibited enjoyment and learning outcomes (29% did not enjoy the session and comments included "didn't really learn much... discussion useless (too noisy)"). However, the participants who were able to ignore or otherwise overcome such complications reported the session to be "very engaging... interesting to have a debate... broadened my thinking on maternal morbidity and aspects of maternal mortality". 82% of the attendees reported that the subject materials were "relevant to my research and/or practice" and 88% agreed that the level of assumed prior knowledge was appropriate. One respondent mentioned that the topic "could be considered in more depth".

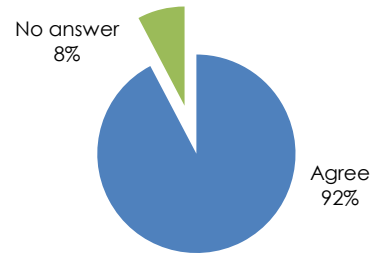
Do you think our webpages were clear, comprehensive and well presented?

The GLOW webpages gained a generally positive reception but 29% of the delegates who returned any feedback did not agree that they were "clear, comprehensive and well presented". Comments included "the webpage was quite well designed... very basic, slightly boring, but informative... okay but sometimes typos... I was unable to find the programme online... it would have been great to have the programme in an obvious place online... I could never find anything online except the call for posters... hard to find the programme". Therefore it may be appropriate to consider navigability in advance of the next GLOW conference.



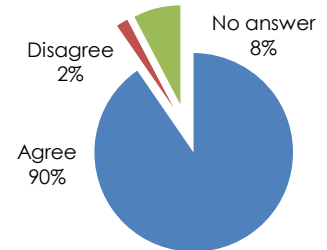
Do you think registration was easy?

Our registration process was highly commended as "helpful... great... fantastic... seamless". 92% of our evaluation respondents agreed registration was easy and none disagreed.



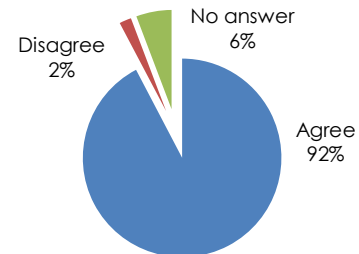
Do you think our pre-conference information and correspondence was clear and comprehensive?

90% of the evaluation respondents also agreed our correspondence to delegates in advance of the event was clear and comprehensive, with a single complaint that "I did not receive any advance email notification of the conference programme". All our other comments were positive, with highlights such as "Sarah was fantastic... great communication from Sarah".



Do you think the conference pack was informative?

92% of our evaluation respondents praised the "informative and comprehensive... very well presented and useful" conference pack. Some of our attendees requested electronic copies of the material (either as CDs within delegate packs or via the GLOW website). Therefore it may be appropriate for the conference organisers to consider electronic provision for next year.

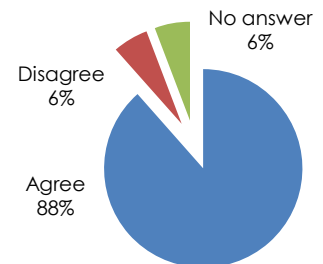


Do you think our venue was convenient?

Do you think our facilities were pleasant?

Do you think our refreshments were enjoyable?

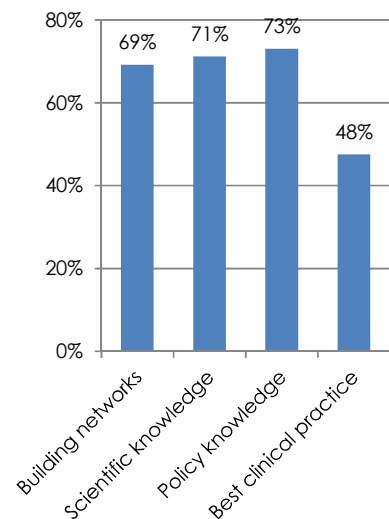
Our conference venue inspired simultaneous admiration and suggestions for potential improvements. Comments varied between "stunning... excellent lunch... very good food... good time management" and "too noisy... the room was cold... lunch was not that good... hot food would have been better... we expected hot food for lunch in such cold weather... not enough plates at lunchtime". Overall 88% of our delegates were sufficiently satisfied to agree that "the conference venue was convenient; facilities were pleasant; refreshments were enjoyable".



What do you think have been the benefits of the GLOW conference to you?

Commonly reported benefits of the GLOW conference were:

- "Gaining new knowledge of maternal healthcare policy" (73%)
- "Gaining new scientific knowledge" (71%)
- "Building collaborative networks" (69%)
- "Learning best clinical practice" was reported less often (48%).



These results may be instructive to develop the themes of our conference in 2014 – either to focus and build further on the benefits achieved this year or to pay more attention to previously neglected area(s), and promote the next event to an appropriate target audience accordingly.

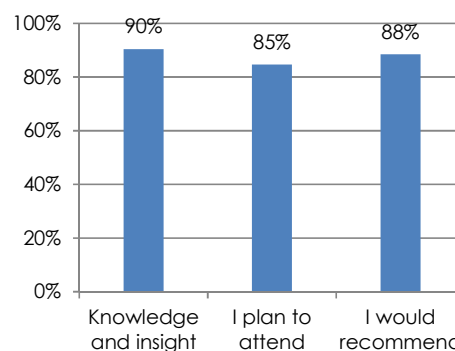
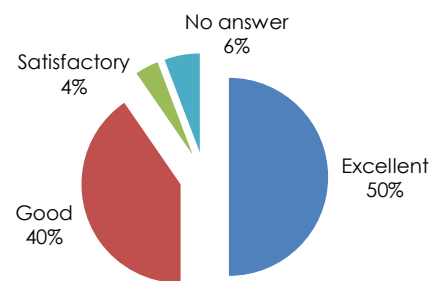
How would you rate this event overall?

Do you think you have gained valuable knowledge and insight?

Do you plan to attend future GLOW conferences?

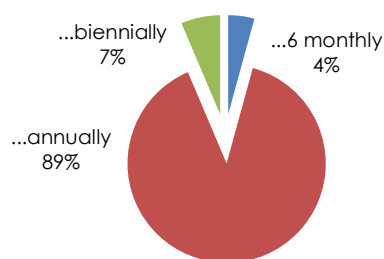
Would you recommend GLOW conferences?

It is heartening to observe that 90% of evaluation respondents rated the 2013 GLOW conference as “excellent” (50%) or “good” (40%) when considering the combined factors of organisation, location and programme content. Additionally, 90% of the audience who returned evaluation forms “gained valuable knowledge and insight”, 85% “plan to attend future conferences” and 88% “would recommend GLOW conferences to others”. Thus we may infer that there is a real enthusiasm for learning and sharing knowledge in the field of global women’s health, and a clear role for the GLOW conference to satisfy this appetite. One delegate particularly highlighted the usefulness to medical students, and it may be relevant for the GLOW committee to remain mindful of this suggestion when promoting our event in 2014 (to consider appropriate media for advertisement and cost implications for the target audience).



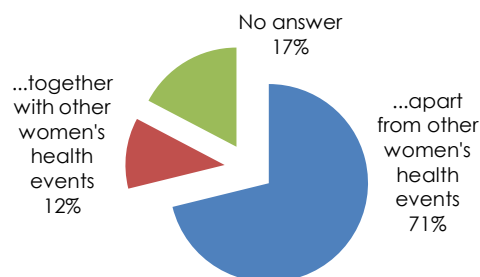
How frequently do you think this conference should be held?

81% of attendees agreed that the GLOW conference should be held on an annual basis (the remaining percentage of respondents either without any preference or split between requests for more and less often).



Should this conference be held separately to other women’s health conferences?

Perhaps surprisingly, 71% of our responding delegates considered that the conference should continue to be held separately to other women’s health conferences (such as FIGO, ICM or RCOG events), notwithstanding the potential benefits of logistic convenience and economies of scale in a combined arrangement. Possible reasons for the preference could be to ensure the accessibility, inclusivity and friendliness of GLOW, and/or to preclude potential for any unmanageably long absence from regular employment on a single occasion. These considerations are mentioned in other general comments about the event this year.



Other comments

Miscellaneous responses to the GLOW conference 2013 were overwhelmingly positive:

Contents

"Excellent conference... fantastic presentations... an excellent day... useful and enjoyable... the variety of approaches, posters, presentations and workshops made GLOW stand out... I'm used to more clinically focused events but as a midwife the GLOW conference gave much more of a balance that was relevant to me and kept me engaged... a good balance of policy and practical implementation..."

Atmosphere

"...nice and informal... great atmosphere for learning and sharing ideas with like-minded people... good for networking... I enjoyed the international involvement and networking... perhaps it could be a 2-day conference to allow more time for networking, especially with overseas visitors... especially because the conference is separate from larger conferences, it is a smaller setting to network and meet people (this is a very nice feature)... inspiration and encouragement to keep going was the most valuable thing... being with people who share my passion was very encouraging..."

Context

"...good to hear about some research with a focus on community perspectives and lots of qualitative work... it would be nice to increase collaborative working between women's health organisations..."

Ammalife

"...I congratulate the organisers of this conference... well done to Ammalife for organising such a good useful event... would have been nice to see an introduction to Ammalife and the work of the charity."

Final Thoughts

We hope that the GLOW conference 2013 event has enabled all the attendees to work more effectively both as independent experts and complementary collaborators in the fight for better maternal healthcare worldwide.

The opportunity to make a difference must be grasped and the time to grasp it is NOW.