



**GUIDELINE FOR VOLUNTARY RESIGNATION FROM THE
ROLE OF SUPERVISOR OF MIDWIVES**

Guideline produced by:	LSAMO Forum UK
Guideline production date:	Version 1 November 2004 Version 2 June 2009
Consultation process:	LSAMO Forum (UK)
Draft produced by:	Version 3: Mary Vance, February 2010
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Guideline approved by:	LSAMO Forum (UK)
Guideline approval date:	1 st March 2010
Guideline Implementation date:	March 2010
Guideline review date:	March 2013
LSAMO identified for archiving guideline:	Joy Kirby

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Introduction

This guideline has been developed in order to support Supervisors of Midwives (SoMs) who may wish to voluntarily resign from their role.

Reasons for voluntary resignation

A SoM may resign from the role for a number of reasons including:-

- retirement
- moving away from the area
- a change in employment
- time out on secondment
- health issues and/or other personal reasons

Informing the Local Supervising Authority (LSA)

In normal circumstances the SoM should give at least one months notice of her intention to resign. This will enable her supervisor colleagues to arrange for the midwives 'orphaned' by the resignation to arrange for new SoMs for the midwives concerned.

When the decision to resign has been reached, the SoM should notify the Contact supervisor¹ and the LSA Midwifery Officer (LSAMO) in writing. The letter of resignation should be accompanied by a completed exit questionnaire (see appendix), if appropriate. The completed exit questionnaire will enable the LSAMO to collect data to:-

- Identify why SoMs are resigning
- Identify any trends
- Identify any issues that need to be addressed, in order to improve the retention of high calibre SoMs.

If the SoM herself does not write to the LSAMO, the Contact supervisor must do so. This will ensure that the correct information regarding practising SoMs is held on the LSA Database. The SoM should 'orphan' the midwives in her caseload prior to her resignation as she will not have access to the LSA Database once resigned.

In some instances, the LSAMO may be able to offer support to the supervisor, which will enable her to continue in the role.

On receipt of a confirmed date of resignation, the LSAMO will notify the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) of the supervisor's resignation. This information will be entered on the LSA Database which notifies the NMC.

¹ where there is a Contact supervisor in post



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Long – term Breaks (over 12 months)

If any SoM intends to take a long-term break from midwifery practice, e.g. secondment out with maternity services, extended maternity leave, career break, the LSAMO and the Contact supervisor should be notified in writing to ensure that the LSA Database holds current information on practising SoMs and to ensure that the SoMs supervisees are offered alternative arrangements during her absence .

Time limited breaks

In exceptional circumstances, a SoM may temporarily discontinue the role for a time limited period (usually no longer than 6 months – 1 year). Examples may include:-

- ill health
- study leave
- maternity leave
- personal circumstances

The SoM should inform the LSAMO and the Contact supervisor in writing that she intends to take a break and the expected timescale. At the end of the time limited period the SoM must notify the LSAMO and the Contact SoM whether she intends to discontinue or resume the role. If discontinuing her role, the SoM should complete the exit questionnaire (see appendix).

Subsequent appointment as a supervisor of midwives

Voluntary resignation / long-term break do not necessarily preclude reappointment as a SoM. A midwife can be considered for re-appointment provided she:-

- has been appointed as a supervisor within the three years preceding reappointment
- undergoes the LSA's selection process to be re-appointed,
- has a satisfactory reference from her previous LSAMO, (LSAMO Forum (UK); NMC 2004; NMC 2006)

Midwives who have not been reappointed as a SoM within three years but less than five years of resigning must undertake an update before being considered for an appointment (NMC 2006).

The update must be of sufficient length and content to enable the midwife's ability to achieve the NMC's supervisor of midwives competencies to be assessed. An LSAMO and a preparation programme leader will



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determine jointly how to meet the midwife's learning needs (NMC 2006).

Those SoMs intending to return to the role may find it helpful to keep their supervisory portfolios up to date. This will enable them to evidence their PREP requirements on returning to the role.

It is important that the SoM receives additional support when returning to the role and duties of a SoM. The LSAMO may recommend a facilitated, structured orientation programme, prior to resuming the full responsibilities of the role.

Midwives who have not been reappointed as SoMs within five years of resigning will be required to repeat the preparation programme (NMC 2006).



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References

LSAMO Forum (UK) *Guideline C for the Nomination, Selection and Appointment of Supervisors of Midwives* available online at <http://www.midwife.org.uk>

Nursing & Midwifery Council (2004) *Midwives rules and standards*. London; NMC.

Nursing & Midwifery Council (2006) *Standards for the preparation and practice of supervisors of midwives*. London; NMC.



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Appendix

Exit questionnaire

What is the reason for your resignation?
When and where were you trained as a SoM?
Were you developed/ inducted adequately for your role as a SoM?
What improvement could be made to the way that you were inducted/ prepared for your role as a SoM?
How well do think your training and development needs were assessed and met?
What training would you have liked or needed that you did not get, and what effect would this have had?
What training and development that you had, did you find most helpful and enjoyable?
What can you say about the way your performance as a SoM was measured, and the feedback to you of your performance results?
What would you say about how you were motivated, and how that could have been improved?
What can you say about communications within the LSA?
What has been good/enjoyable/satisfying for you in your time as a SoM?
What has been frustrating/difficult/upsetting to you in your time as a SoM?



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What could have been done early on to prevent the situation developing/provide a basis for you to stay as a SoM?
What can you say about the processes and procedures or systems that have contributed to your decision to resign?
What specific suggestions would you have for how the LSA could manage these issues better in future?
Would you consider re-appointment as a SoM in the LSA in the future?