

Liverpool Medical Institution

Autumn 2025

Free public lectures

Major changes are taking place in maternity care across the UK. Over the last decades we have seen gradual changes as those getting pregnant have changed leading to increased rates of diabetes, high blood pressure and stillbirth. But changes in society have also meant that women have also become more educated with more access to high (and low) quality information with which to make their own decisions. These changes, combined with important legal developments, mean that women should be very much in charge of their own births. And yet, several maternity scandals and reports from the Care Quality Commission have shown that this cultural change has not always happened. Legal payouts are at a record high and in hospitals many maternity staff feel unsupported and victimised.

These factors have come together over the last 5 years in a perfect storm where maternal choice, coupled with fear and distrust in the system, have led to escalating levels of labour induction, caesarean section and 'free birth'. A national conversation is needed into where maternity care in the UK is going.

How can we improve outcomes for women and their babies whilst at the same time providing safe, compassionate, empowering care? This lecture series, streamed live from the iconic Liverpool Medical Institution, will explore birth in the UK: current perspectives as well as visions for the future by leading maternity practitioners, campaigners and experts.



Bringing Life
The beauty, safety and culture of birth today

A series of free public lectures about the status of birth in the UK, hosted by Prof Andrew Weeks.

September 2025 – June 2026
Liverpool Medical Institution 6-7pm;
Join in-person or live online – see www.lmi.org.uk

The Liverpool Medical Institution

Liverpool Medical Institution is one of the oldest medical societies in the world. Its earliest origins were as a 'Surgeons' Book Club' formed by a group of local surgeons in 1770. As it grew, it led to the founding of the Liverpool Medical Library in 1779. For many years the library moved between various hospitals across Liverpool, but in 1833 the present building was built to it. In 1839 the Liverpool Medical Library and Liverpool Medical Society merged, creating the Liverpool Medical Institution. Since then, for nearly 200 years the LMI has been the centre of the Liverpool medical community, a place where medical topics could be discussed and knowledge gained. The building was extended in 1966 and refurbished in 1998.

The Institution continues to serve the purposes for which it was founded, to foster an environment for furthering medical education and knowledge in the medical community and the general public. Today, as a Registered Charity, it is used as a venue for scientific and social meetings and conference venue. It also houses an important collection of historical medical books, journals, equipment and other rare items.

The iconic **LMI rooms are available to hire** out – contact admin@lmi.org.uk

LMI Membership is open to all in the medical community. It allows full use of the building and facilities as well as access to online recordings of previous talks. **Join at www.lmi.org.uk.**

AUTUMN PROGRAMME OF LECTURES

Lectures are free to the public and held in the **LMI Lecture Theatre at 6-7pm**. The LMI is opposite the Anglican Cathedral on the corner of Hope Street and Mount Pleasant. To attend, book on the link at www.lmi.org.uk. To watch the free live stream, find the **Zoom link on the LMI website** under 'what's on – lecture programme'. The link will be published on the day of the lecture.

Please check dates on www.lmi.org.uk for any last-minute changes.

- Thurs 18th Sept Maternity care in the UK – how did we get to this?**
Prof Andrew Weeks, Prof of International Maternal Health, University of Liverpool
- Thurs 25th Sept A history of British Maternity Care.**
Prof James Drife, Emeritus Prof of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, University of Leeds
- Thurs 16th Oct Concorde – a view from the cockpit**
Captain John Hutchinson, Retired Concorde pilot
- Fri 17th Oct The highs and lows of frontline midwifery.**
Ms Leah Hazard, Midwife and bestselling author
- Thurs 4th Nov Writing jokes with Ken Dodd**
Mr John Martin, comedian, author and writer
- Weds 19th Nov What 3 years in the hot seat has taught me about leadership.**
Prof Ranee Thakar, President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists
- Thurs 27th Nov The extraordinary world of breastmilk.**
Prof Catriona Waitt, Prof of Clinical Pharmacology and Global Health, Uni of Liverpool
- Wed 10th Dec Whose baby is it anyway? The legality and philosophy of birth.**
Prof Sheelagh McGuinness, Professor of Law, University of Bristol.

LMI lectures to come in 2026...

Alex Heazell	Fear and Hope: A complex relationship with birth
Susie Crowe	The clinical benefits of compassionate care.
Benjamin Black	What is good maternity care in humanitarian crises?
Liz O'Grady	Professional Standards (joint meeting with Medico-Legal Society)
Abi Merriel	Antenatal education classes: the key to unlock the maternity crisis?
Clea Harmer	What does good birth look like from the neonatal unit?
Soo Downe	Can overusing risk assessments actually increase the risk in labour and birth?
Geeta Nayar	How do we prevent Birth Trauma?
Carol Kingdon	A social history of academic midwifery in the UK
Indie Kaur	Is India ready for midwifery care?
Tina Lavender	Strengthening midwifery globally
Zarko Alfirevic	Evidence based medicine - can we trust the evidence?
Jimmy Walker	What does 'good' look like for UK maternity services? A view from the maternity reviews.

114 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, L3 5SR

www.lmi.org.uk