



Influencing and Supporting Policy



Professor Deirdre Daly

SCHOOL

Dept of Midwifery,
School of Nursing &
Midwifery

PARTNER AGENCIES

National Women and Infants Health Programme 🌀 Rotunda Hospital 🌀 Coombe Hospital 🌀 University Maternity Hospital Galway 🌀 Midlands Regional Maternity Hospital, Portlaoise 🌀 National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit (NPEU), Cork 🌀 National Women's Council 🌀 National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) 🌀 European Midwives Association 🌀 University of Gothenburg 🌀 Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI), Australia 🌀 University of North Carolina 🌀 Johns Hopkins School of Nursing 🌀 University of Zurich 🌀 Amsterdam University Medical Centre, Groningen 🌀 Oxford Brookes University

FUNDERS:

Health Research Board 🌀 Health Service Executive 🌀 EIT Health 🌀 Rotunda Foundation 🌀 Research Ireland 🌀 EU COST

SUBJECT AREAS

Birth 🌀 Caesarean Section 🌀 Childbirth 🌀 Epidemiology; Maternal Health and Maternal Morbidity 🌀 Maternity Care 🌀 Midwifery 🌀 Midwifery Education 🌀 Pregnancy 🌀 Stress Urinary Incontinence 🌀 Vaginal Birth 🌀 Women's Health

And How is Mum Doing?

While there is rightly a research focus on improving the experience of pregnancy and childbirth in women's health, it is also important to consider the physical, psychological and social health of women afterwards.

Professor Deirdre Daly's work has been exploring this area of Irish experience for over ten years. It began with the establishment of the MAMMI (Maternal health And Maternal Morbidity in Ireland) study which has followed more than 3,000 first-time mothers and examined their experiences. It is now an established Trinity research centre with an agenda to drive improvements in pregnancy, childbirth, early parenthood and

and early childhood care.

Professor Daly has worked with the HSE and National Women's and Infants Health Programme (NWIHP), informing their service evaluation and sitting on national committees dealing with maternal morbidity, mortality and maternity education. She also works with PPI (Public and Patient Involvement) partners, such as representatives from National Deaf Women Ireland.

One major policy contribution by Professor Daly has been the evaluation of the Postnatal Hubs, which found substantial benefits for women and was subsequently cited in the government's expansion of the service.

This work showcases how Trinity is changing public attitudes to a societal issue through multiple approaches, such as evidence-informed programmes, deliberative processes and media engagement.

Prepared by Trinity Civic Engagement for Societal Impact, September 2026



A Consistent Trustworthy Dataset

What is fundamental to the influence which Professor Daly has achieved on policy and practice has been the longitudinal nature of the MAMMI (Maternal health And Maternal Morbidity in Ireland) study.

This dataset, over an extended period, is showing both how contemporary policy is affecting women's perinatal health while also showing what issues persist in terms of women's experiences.

It is also being driven by its commitment to PPI (Public and Patient Involvement) which is driving a translation agenda for the findings, ensuring that what is uncovered in the data is then translated to policy and / or practice.

This has proved a trustworthy source for consultation by policymakers and shows up in publications such as 'Women's Health in Ireland' the evidence base for the Women's Health Task Force and the Women's health Action Plan.

Evaluating Postnatal Hubs

In 2025, the National Women and Infants Health Programme (NWIHP), which leads the management, organisation and delivery of maternity, gynaecology and neonatal services within the HSE, commissioned Professor Daly with Dr Susan Hannon carried out an independent evaluation of Ireland's pilot Postnatal Hubs. Their review involved interviews with women, healthcare professionals, hub staff, service directors and the HSE's National Women's and Infants Health Programme, alongside a review of existing evidence.

The evaluation found compelling evidence that the hubs were improving postnatal care, with women reporting greater satisfaction with attention to both physical and mental health.

The report led to the Department of Health subsequently announced the launch of four new Postnatal Hubs, citing the positive evaluation and women's demand for expanded services. The hubs provide community-based care intended to complement existing maternity services, with midwives playing a central role. This will extend to 13 sites by the end of 2026.

Maternity and the Workplace

Professor Daly, partnering with Dr Sinéad Monaghan, has secured Research Ireland funding to study the relationship between motherhood, health, employment, organisational culture and career progression.

The study will also explore how maternity and paternity policies can create systemic barriers and possible solutions to those challenges.

International Involvement

Professor Daly has been influencing policy throughout her career. She was president of the European Midwives Association from 2005 to 2009 and a member of the European Union Health Policy Forum. She served as an expert for the European Commission on a peer assessment mission concerning midwifery in Croatia and participated in a European Commission/TAIEX workshop concerning recognition of professional qualifications in midwifery.

Outputs

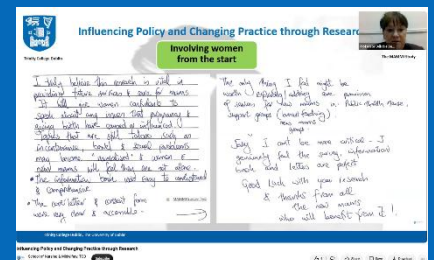


Women's Health After Motherhood (2019)

Developed in partnership with the University of Barcelona, this MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) was designed to provide advice and strategies on how to prioritise postpartum care and help women support one another during the postpartum period.

Influencing Policy and Changing Practice through Research (2025)

Professor Daly spoke on how her work is influencing policy and changing practice around perinatal health, particularly through the development of the MAMMI Study and the involvement of PPI (Public and Patient Involvement) contributors.

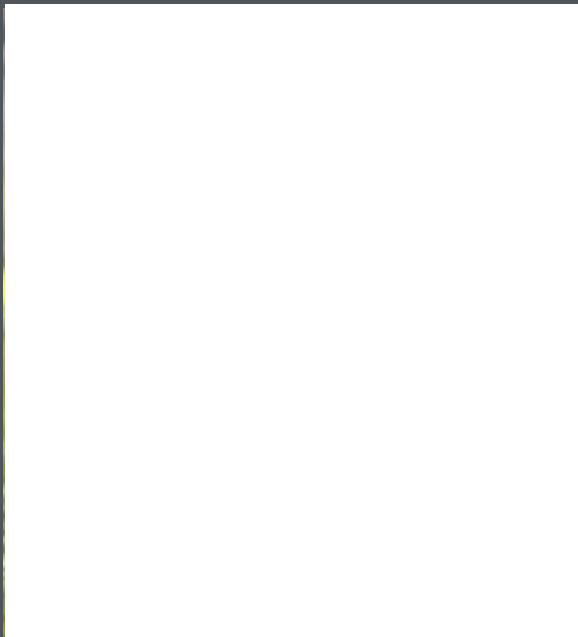


Ninth Plenary of the North / South Inter-Parliamentary Association (2024)

Professor Daly and Drs Susan Hannon, Helen Connor and Julie Anderson shared their expertise with the members of both legislatures on perinatal mental health and how it can be supported.

“You have an ethical obligation and a moral obligation to share those findings. That is your work.”

Professor Deirdre Daly
Influencing Policy and Changing Practice
September 2025



Professor Deirdre Daly is Professor of Midwifery in Trinity and Director of the Trinity Centre for Maternity Care Research. Her research focuses on maternal health and maternity care, with particular expertise in longitudinal cohort studies, mixed-methods and qualitative research, and experience in randomised trials. She leads the Maternal health And Maternal Morbidity in Ireland (MAMMI) study and its follow-up research, including second-baby, five-year and 10-year studies.

She has supervised numerous PhD and MSc research students and contributes extensively to doctoral education through mentoring, thesis committees and mock Vivas. She has served as an external examiner for doctoral and postgraduate research programmes internationally, including in the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Germany.

For More Information

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