

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Department:	Aneurin Bevan University Health Board Maternity Services
SOP Ref No:	ABUHB/F&T/1336
SOP Title:	Provision of Free Data SIMs for Eligible Service Users

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Change / Amendment History

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1 Introduction

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) sets out the process for allocating free mobile Data SIMs to eligible maternity service users within Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB). The initiative supports equitable access to digital maternity systems (e.g., BadgerNet and GROW 2.0) and essential online health resources, helping to reduce digital exclusion and data poverty amongst our population.

Digital exclusion and data poverty continue to affect a proportion of maternity service users in Wales. The Bridging the Gap blueprint, piloted in Cwm Taf Morgannwg and now adopted for ABUHB, demonstrates a structured model for scaling maternity-specific digital inclusion support via the National Databank partnership, Good Things Foundation.

2 Scope

This SOP applies to all maternity staff involved in identifying, referring, assessing eligibility for, allocating, and supporting the use of free Data SIMs. It excludes individuals who do not meet eligibility criteria or requests outside maternity services.

3 Eligibility criteria

Someone receiving data through the National Databank must:

- ✓ Be 18+ years old **AND**
- ✓ Be from a low-income household

And qualifies in one or several of the following statements:

- ✓ Has no access or insufficient access to the internet at home
- ✓ **AND/OR** has no or insufficient access to the internet when away from the home
- ✓ **AND/OR** cannot afford their existing monthly contract or top up.



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4 Roles & Responsibilities

- **Midwives/Obstetricians:** Identify digitally excluded service users; refer via the Digital Maternity inbox.
- **Digital Midwife:** Triage and assess eligibility; allocate appropriate SIM; support activation, provide user guidance and record allocation.
- **Community Midwife:** Support Ongoing use; re-escalate needs to Digital Maternity Team.
- **Digital Maternity Team:** Maintain stock, report metrics, oversee governance, audit, and quality improvement.

5 Definitions

Term	Definition
Data SIM	A SIM card providing mobile data access for a defined period (6–12 months depending on network offer).
National Databank	A Good Things Foundation scheme enabling registered partners to distribute free mobile data to eligible people.
Connected Care assessment	Set of screening questions embedded in maternity booking to identify digital exclusion and data poverty.

6 Procedure

6.1 Identification & Referral

- During initial contact or at the booking appointment, assess the individual's eligibility by completing the Eligibility Assessment Questions.



- If the individual meets the eligibility criteria, submit a referral to the Digital Maternity Team via BadgerNet. Ensure you select the appropriate reason for referral from the list of eligibility criteria.
- In the event that Badgernet is unavailable/ not accessible, please submit a referral via the ABB.maternitydatabank@wales.nhs.uk inbox.

6.2 Triage & Eligibility Assessment

- The Digital Midwives review all referrals on a weekly basis.
- Eligibility is confirmed by verifying that the individual meets the required criteria (e.g., aged 18 years or over, on a low income, and/or experiencing limited or unaffordable internet access).
- The Digital Midwife selects the most appropriate SIM card offer based on the individual's identified needs.

6.3 Allocation & Collection

- Arrange for the individual to collect the SIM card from their nearest Antenatal Clinic/ Birth centre.
- Provide the individual with a Databank Pack, which includes: a welcome letter, service-user information, the survey link, details of local digital inclusion hubs, and guidance on how to reduce mobile data usage.
- Inform the individual that participation in research conducted by the Good Things Foundation and the ABUHB digital midwives team are entirely voluntary. Declining to take part in research will not affect their access to data-poverty SIM support.

6.4 Activation & Use (Network-specific)

O2 SIM (up to 12 months):

- Provide 25GB of data with unlimited calls and texts. A monthly top-up voucher code will be issued via SMS. Digital midwife selects voucher subscription length and enters recipient phone number (if they are being provided a new O2 SIM card this will be the number of this SIM).



- To redeem the voucher: Dial 4444 → Select *Option 1* (Top-Up) → Select *Option 2* (Voucher) → Enter the 16-digit voucher code → Await confirmation message.
- If a voucher subscription period of multiple months has been selected, the recipient will receive a new data voucher by text 2 message each month. This will need to be activated each month by calling 4444 and entering the new voucher code.
- To retain the individual's existing mobile number, advise them to request a PAC code and follow the number-transfer instructions available on the O2 website.
- For additional support, individuals can contact O2 on 0344 809 0222 or 4445 from an O2 mobile and quote "National Databank".

Vodafone SIM (6 months)

- Provide 40GB of data with unlimited calls and texts for a 30-day period. The allowance automatically refreshes each month for a total duration of six months.
- The SIM card is preloaded. Activation occurs automatically once the SIM is inserted into the device.

Three SIM:

- Provide 24GB of preloaded data. The SIM card activates automatically when inserted into the device. The data available is 24GB in total, no additional top-ups/refreshes included.

6.5 End of Support Period & Re-referral

At the end of the data period, the service user may dispose of the SIM. If the SIM is not disposed of, the contract will end and no further data will be available. For further help, they can contact the community midwife, who can raise a Halo ticket with the Digital Maternity Team ABB.badgernetlocaladmin@wales.nhs.uk.



In the event of a pregnancy loss, the data period will continue to the contract end date.

7 Governance

Governance oversight is provided by the Digital Maternity Team, receiving quarterly metrics on referrals, allocations, activation, and outcomes.

At the collection of SIM card appointment:

- Required information is collated and stored locally within the Digital Maternity folder located on the Maternity SharePoint site.
- The information collected is used for audit purposes only.
- No personal identifiable data (PID) is shared externally.

7.1 Risks

- Inconsistent allocation if eligibility is not applied uniformly.
- Risk of ongoing digital exclusion if SIMs are delayed or stock is insufficient.
- Misuse of data allowances—mitigated by user guidance and signposting.
- Equity risks for non-English speakers—mitigated by bilingual materials and interpreter access.

7.2 Audit

Biannual audits will review:

- Referral volumes,
- Eligibility decisions,
- SIM distribution and activation,
- Service users survey response rates and engagement with digital maternity system.

7.3 Staff Access and Data Security

A secure spreadsheet containing personal identifiable data (PID) of individuals who have received a SIM card is maintained by the Digital Maternity Team. Access to this spreadsheet is strictly limited to authorised Digital Maternity Team staff members.

Access Management:

- Access is granted only to staff who require it for the delivery, monitoring, or audit of the SIM-card support programme.
- Access permissions are reviewed regularly by the Senior Lead Informatics Specialist Midwife to ensure they remain appropriate.

Staff Leaving the Digital Maternity Team:

- When a staff member leaves the Digital Maternity Team, the Senior Lead Informatics Specialist Midwife is responsible for revoking their access to all Digital Maternity Team folders, including the PID spreadsheet.

Staff Leaving the Organisation:

- When a staff member leaves Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, the organisation's formal Joiners and Leavers Process must be followed to ensure timely and secure removal of digital access.

8 References

7.1 Internal References

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (2021) Records Management Code of Practice

7.2 External References

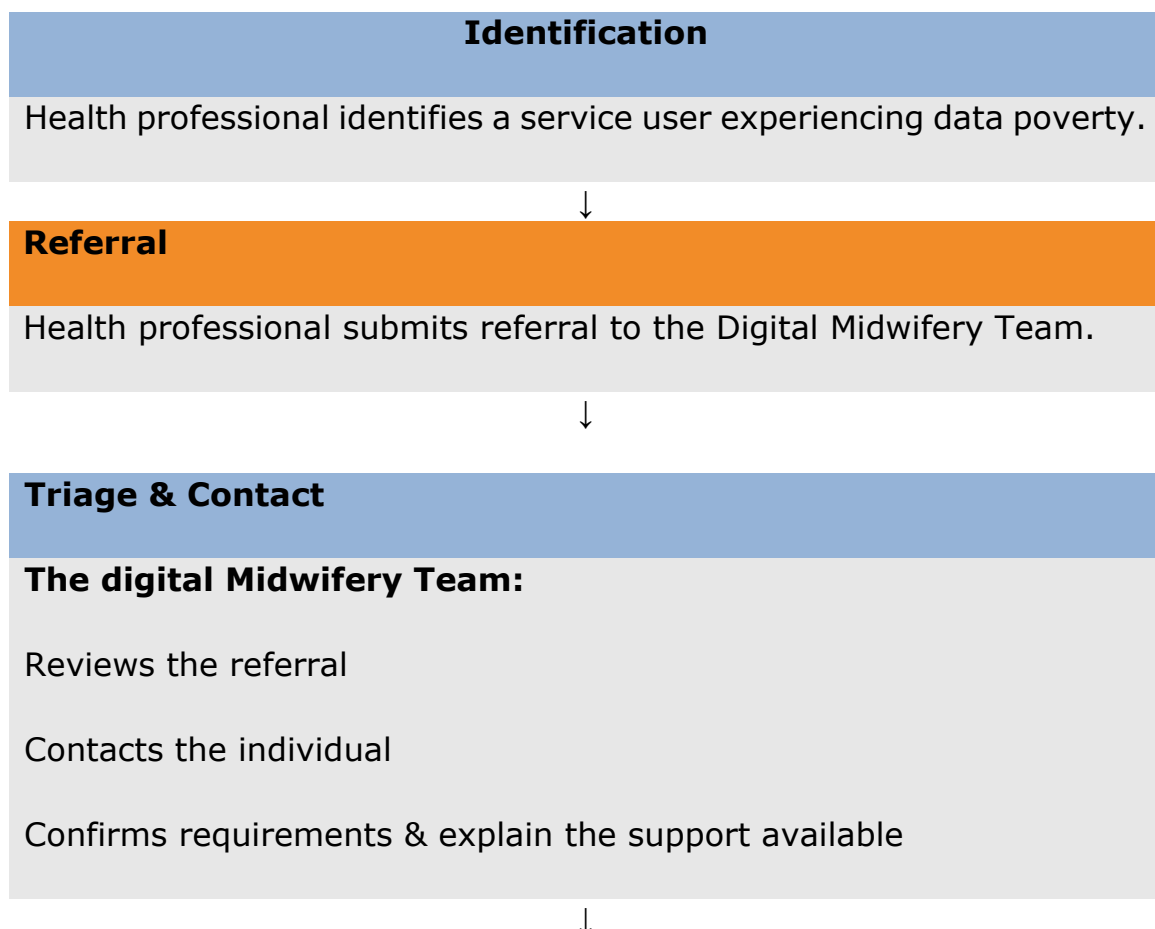
Good Things Foundation (2026) *Good Things Foundation*. Available at: <https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/> (Accessed: 20 January 2026).

Lewis, C. (2026) *Bridging the Gap: An Implementation Blueprint for Scaling Digital Inclusion in Maternity Services Across Welsh Health Boards (Executive Summary)*. Unpublished internal document received via email.

NHS Wales Information Security Policy dhw.nhs.wales/ig/ig-documents/ig-framework/all-wales-information-security-policy-v1-pdf/

9 Appendix

1.1 Appendix 1: Data Poverty Support Process – Digital Maternity Team (Flow Chart)





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Appointment Arrangement

An appointment is arranged to meet in person for:

SIM card set-up

Device/phone support (if needed)



Research Participation

The individual is informed that:

They may decline participation in research with the Good Things Foundation

Declining research does not affect access to the data-poverty SIM support



Appointment & Data Storage

At the Appointment:

Required Information is collated and stored locally in the Digital Maternity folder, located on the Maternity SharePoint site

Information is used for audit purposes only

No PID is shared externally



End of Contract

Service user advised to:



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Destroy SIM card when the contract period ends.



Staff Access & Governance

If a staff member leaves the Digital Maternity Team:

Senior lead Informatics specialist midwife is responsible for revoking access to all Digital Maternity Team Folders.

If staff member leaves the organisation:

ABUHB's joiners and leavers process will be followed.