

# Rupert Fawdry

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Dear Colleague

Re: You; and the Electronic Encyclopaedia of Perinatal Data

Congratulations! You have a unique opportunity to take play a major role in this, the most important Maternity IT Initiative in the world (Try googling "Perinatal Data" if in doubt - the EEPD seems to be one of the only websites concerned, not just with the analysis of perinatal data collected by someone else, but rather with using IT to improve the quality of individual consultations)

30 years ago I first realised the potential for computers to reduce the risks of human errors in the care of individual expectant mothers; and also to cut the bureaucratic paperwork of childbirth. Since then, the MAGIC of easy access to investigation results and individual correspondence has become commonplace. But I have also seen the MALIGNANT MAYHEM epitomised by the cry "How can we stop clinicians disappearing under the weight of data collection to the detriment of care?"

Only an internet-based, open-source initiative controlled by maternity care professionals will overcome our present stagnation.

And the EEPD needs contributions from you; and each volume needs a volunteer editor. So far the EEPD has been personally funded and we cannot therefore afford to pay your expenses but the EEPD is becoming sufficiently important as to look good on your C.V.

If interested in a possible contributory or editorial role, please get in touch by e-mail to: [eepd@fawdry.demon.co.uk](mailto:eepd@fawdry.demon.co.uk), or phone me directly at 00441525 37 01 37 or 0044 77 678 23 8 27.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon

Yours sincerely

Rupert Fawdry

P.S. Any ideas about funding are welcome. Although I have tried many times over the past 30 years to get official support, there is a dangerous probability that any centralised financial control will yet again marginalise individual clinical care; and instead prioritise using IT to the collect data for managerial and political purposes, regardless of the workload imposed on front-line midwifery and medical staff.

# How can you help?

The EEPD is basically quite simple.

It consists of “.pdf” files, or “.doc” files - with a few Powerpoint presentations.

## Send me anything you think might be useful

The vast majority of the material needed is easy for anyone to create. Just send to us, by e-mail, any potentially useful material, as “.pdf”, or “.doc” or “.pages” files, or especially any Powerpoint Presentations which you have created and think might be useful to your colleagues.

## Other Languages

In time there will be a need for a similar Encyclopaedia in other Languages e.g. Arabic, Russian, Chinese etc. If anyone is interested in this concept do get in touch. At first much of the content can usefully be in English, but the home pages need to be in each new language to encourage native speakers to contribute or to translate sections. I am happy for such versions to be accessible via the [www.fawdry.info](http://www.fawdry.info) website.

## Other Specialities and Sub-Specialities

If anyone sees the need for a similar Electronic Encyclopaedia for their own speciality or sub-speciality do get in touch.

Do contact me if you can see any way to help. 0044 1525 37 01 37

Thanks

Rupert Fawdry

## Becoming an Editor of the “Home-Panel” for each Volume?

The text of the main home “panels” for each volume exists as a simple Mac “.pages” (or MS Word “.doc”) files.

Revised versions can therefore easily be updated and spell-checked. And, once all the associated “.pdf”, or “.doc” files have been loaded onto the website, all hyperlinks can be immediately checked.

The facility created by Lee Gunn, my website designer, using “.php” files,, is now such that an “Edit EEPD” program can be loaded onto your computer. Following an individual password check, updated text for the website can then be selected, copied and pasted directly onto each section of each web page. In this way any page can be updated within minutes. To see what such a home-panel file looks like see [www.fawdry.info/eepd/000\\_\\_DESIGN/05\\_LOG/Panel05.pdf](http://www.fawdry.info/eepd/000__DESIGN/05_LOG/Panel05.pdf) ???

“√” after a hyperlink indicates that it works, while “ ???” after a hyperlink means that it does not!

If you want to get an idea of what is on the whole website so far, check a regularly updated 60 page document, listing all the current files on the EEPD website at [www.fawdry.info/eepd/000\\_\\_DESIGN/EEPDList.pdf](http://www.fawdry.info/eepd/000__DESIGN/EEPDList.pdf) ???

## **NHS-IT and Maternity Care.**

### **Why the EEPD?**

Over the past 20 years NHS hospitals have purchased excellent, but complex, and fundamentally incompatible, maternity computer systems from many different medical software companies e.g. Protos/iSoft, Euroking, Terranova, CCL - St.Mary's etc.; each created in close collaboration with local midwives and obstetricians.

I personally provided the maternity care expertise which allowed Protos to be purchased by about 40 out of the 200 U.K. maternity hospitals.

I have also been closely involved in the development of a series of hand-held pregnancy records of increasing quality and complexity.

Over the same period I was an expert adviser to each of the three major England and Wales maternity care IT initiatives; these being the Mummies Maternity Data Modelling Initiative (1988-92), the Maternity Data Dictionary Initiative (1988-2001) and now the National Maternity Services Dataset initiative (2005-current) All these projects were totally under the control of IT experts.

Sadly none of them have led to any useful outcome. Indeed, for 30 years, I have become vividly aware of an almost unbridgeable chasm between two different worlds. On the one hand the real world of front-line maternity care with the development of hand-held records, and of functioning, but independent maternity computer systems. On the other side I have seen well funded NHS-IT experts spending over £2 million pounds repeatedly trying to use traditional IT methods in a way that has proved to be totally inappropriate. In the words of Andrew Rollerson of Fujitsu-Siemens in 2007: "We are trying to run an enormous programme with the techniques that we are familiar with for running small projects. It isn't working. And it isn't going to work"

Having failed on many occasions to persuade those on power of the need for an open-source, internet-based approach to the problem, I finally decided that, rather than waste the rare expertise I had gained over the past 30 years, I would gradually create what has become the Electronic Encyclopaedia.

Fortunately the technology has now caught up with what has, for so long, been required.

For further details see the website.