

Addressing inequalities in maternal care and outcomes

Peer learning forum – a non-judgemental space to:

- Step back and reflect
- Build greater awareness of what is happening across the provider sector
- Consider familiar problems from new angles and gain new perspectives
- Share insights and learning
- Take away practical ideas that might help address your local challenges
- Build ongoing peer connections

Introduction and context setting: Miriam Deakin – director of development and engagement, NHS Providers & Kate Brintworth – chief midwifery officer, NHS England

Presentations and Panel Q&A:
Kate Brintworth – chief midwifery officer, Donald Peebles – national clinical director, NHS England & Robert Wilson – head of Joint Policy Unity, Sands and Tommy's

Breakouts and feedback

Final reflections:
Miriam Deakin – director of development and engagement, NHS Providers

Please take a couple of minutes to answer our mentimeter question:



Scan here to access mentimeter

- Please note the Chatham House rule applies
- Please keep your camera on wherever possible
- If you lose connection, please re-join using the link in your joining instructions or email health.inequalities@nhsproviders.org
- Please ensure your microphone is muted during presentations to minimise background noise
- After the breakout groups, there will be time to ask questions and make comments about what you have heard today
- If you would like to ask a question audibly, please use the raise hand function
- Any unanswered questions will be taken away and answered after the event
- You will receive a link to an evaluation form at the end of the day, please take the time to complete it, we really do appreciate your feedback.

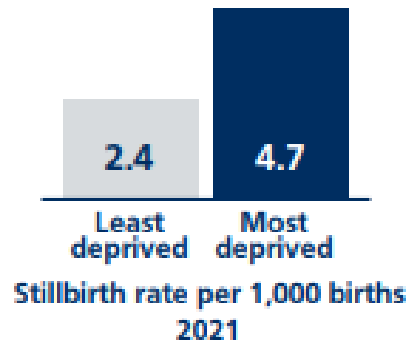
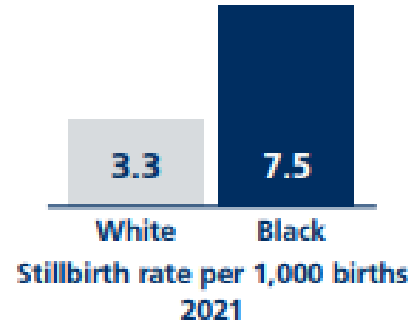
***Promoting equity and equality in local
maternity and neonatal services – role of the
VCSE sector***

**Sands &
Tommy's**
Policy Unit

Working together
to save babies' lives

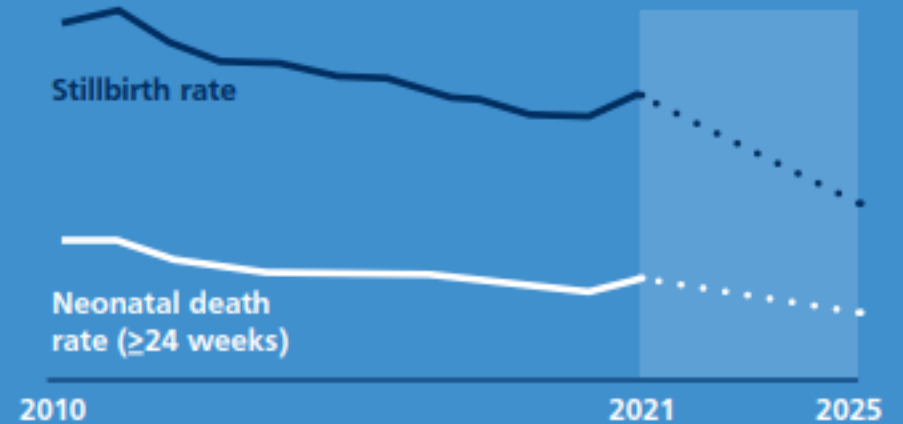
Meaningful action is needed to address stark and persistent inequalities

Black babies are over **2x more likely to be stillborn** compared to White babies



Babies in the most deprived areas are **twice as likely to be stillborn** compared to babies in the least deprived areas

Stillbirth and neonatal death rates are off track to meet the 2025 target for England



Sands and Tommy's Joint Policy Unit

Vision

“Our vision is for a future where fewer babies die, and inequalities in baby loss eliminated so that everyone can benefit from the best possible outcomes.”

Mission

To secure policy change that will reduce rates of miscarriage, stillbirth, pre-term birth and neonatal death, and to work to eliminate inequalities in these outcomes.

Aims

Our core aims are to

- Save babies lives
- Reduce inequalities in baby loss

VSCE Health and Wellbeing Alliance Maternity Consortium

- The VCSE Health and Wellbeing Alliance is a partnership between the voluntary sector, the Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England, and the UK Health Security Agency
- Tommy's and Sands are co-leading a Maternity Consortium that includes National Maternity Voices, the Pregnancy and Baby Charities Network, Five X More, Muslim Women's Network UK and LGBT Mummies.
- Aims: to promote equality and reduce health inequalities; to facilitate integrated working between the voluntary and statutory sectors; and to facilitate collaboration and co-production.

Supporting the implementation of LMNSs Equity & Equality plans

- In September 2021, NHS England published [guidance](#) for Local Maternity and Neonatal Systems (LMNSs) to develop equity and equality action plans
- The guidance encourages LMNSs to co-produce their plans with women and families, working with voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (VCSEs)
- Implementing the equity and equality action plans is listed as an objective in NHS England's [three year delivery plan for maternity and neonatal services](#)

Supporting the implementation of LMNSs Equity & Equality plans

- Met with people across the system to understand: how implementation of equity and equality plans is going; challenges; examples of good practice.
- Hosted an online event to bring LMNSs, VCSEs, MNVPs and other partners together [Maternity Consortium webinar: Working with VCSEs & MNVPs to implement LMNS equity and equality plans \(youtube.com\)](#)
- Developing resources to support the implementation of equity and equality plans and engagement with VCSE sector

“There is excellent work going on linking VCSEs with NHS but it's disjointed and a bit of a postcode lottery”

“We cannot deliver the E&E plans in silo. We must absolutely utilise VCSE, but that this needs funding appropriately.....”

“there is a LOT of variation from one LMNS to another, that it is possible for MNVPs and VCSEs to do amazing things (especially if they are enabled/funded to do so by the LMNS!).”

Feedback from LMNSs

- **Working with VCSEs and MNVPs to implement plans**
 - Mixed involvement from VCSEs and MNVPs in the development and implementation of equity and equality plans with issues around continuity of engagement/co-production
 - Issues around funding and capacity of both LMNSs to engage with VCSEs and MNVPs
 - Not all MNVPs, VCSEs and even healthcare professionals/services on the ground are aware of equity and equality plans, priorities and how their work relates to the plans.
 - MNVPs are not diverse and do not have the funding/capacity to do targeted engagement
- **Funding**
 - Some LMNSs are concerned about funding to implement the equity and equality plans. There are some reports of a decrease in funding from previous years and concerns that the equity and equality funding is no longer ring-fenced and instead included in the general maternity allocation.
 - Funding challenges are meaning LMNSs are struggling to recruit posts to support equity and equality work.

Feedback from LMNSs

- **Assurance and evaluation**

- Some LMNSs have expressed confusion around assurance and evaluation processes for the equity and equality plans with concerns that the impact of the plans will not be measured properly.

“it’s a very large plan which covers a lot of impact areas and there’s a lot of work going on in provider organisations and VCSEs that do not align directly with the equity and equality plan.”

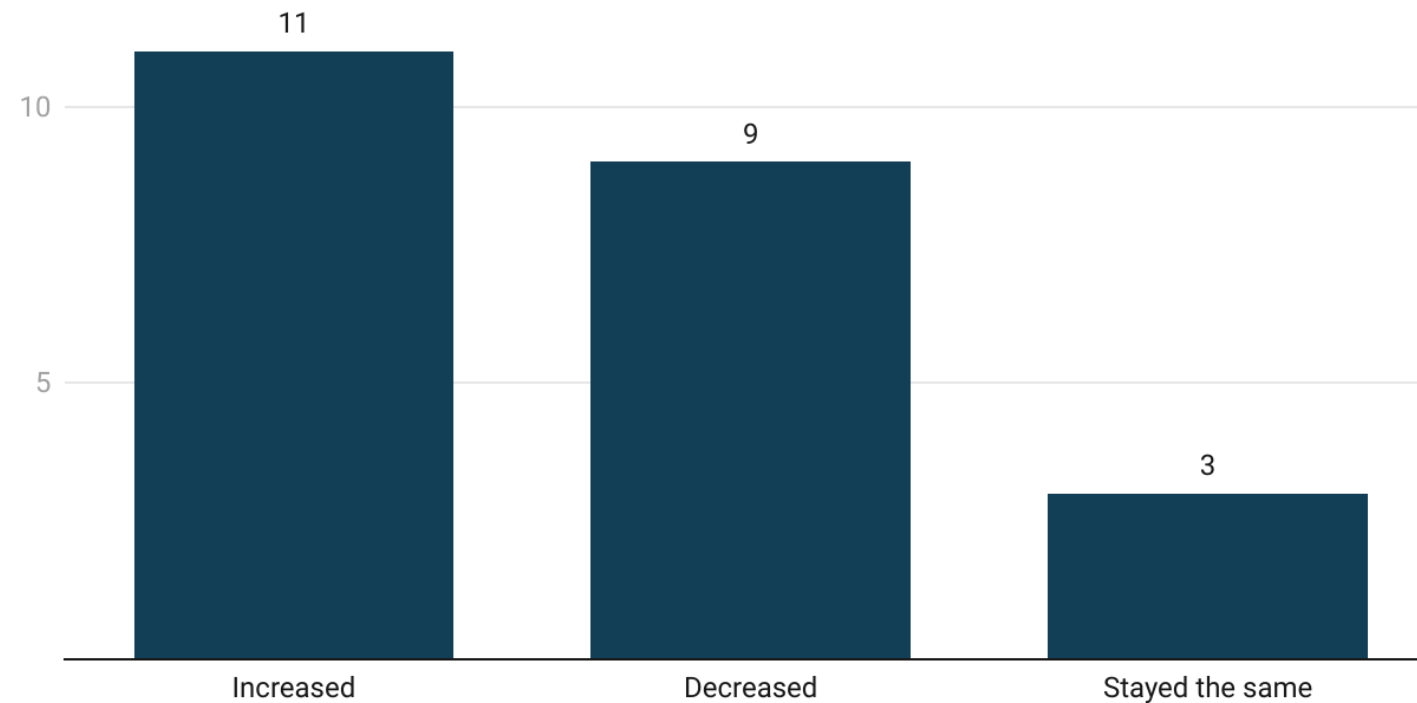
Funding for equity and equality plans

- In 2021-22, LMNSs received ring-fenced funding to produce their equity and equality action plans and implement targeted and enhanced continuity of carer. Each LMNS should have received a minimum of £90,000. Since then, funding has not been ring-fenced.
- There has been concern over variation in funding across LMNSs, with some receiving this funding as part of the general maternity allocation, which risks this work being de-prioritised.
- Sands and Tommy's Joint Policy Unit submitted a Freedom of Information request to each LMNSs to determine levels of funding and variation.*

*We received data from 27 LMNSs (64.3%) on their equity and equality plans' budget and from 23 (54.8%) on their spend¹¹. 15 LMNSs were unable to provide this information, as they did not have access to the data or did not have equity and equality plans as a distinct stream of funding.

Funding for equity and equality plans

Half of LMNSs reported spending less or the same on their equity and equality plans in 2023-24 compared to 2022-23



Data from 23 Local Maternity and Neonatal Systems, via Freedom of Information request.

Chart: Sands & Tommy's Joint Policy Unit • Created with Datawrapper

Other Maternity Consortium projects

[Delivering inclusive and accessible specialist perinatal/maternal mental health services \(October 2022 – April 2023\)](#) Tommys and Sands Maternity Consortium carried out work on ensuring equitable access to specialist perinatal mental health community services and maternal mental health services.

[Barriers to Accessing Maternity Care \(August 2022\)](#) Tommys and Sands Maternity Consortium carried out work on engaging with diverse communities to improve access to appropriate services for those at risk of poorer maternity outcomes.

[Sharing learning from the Starting Well Fund \(December 2022 – February 2023\)](#) Tommys and Sands Maternity Consortium carried out work on sharing learning from, and amplifying the impact of the Starting Well Health and Wellbeing Fund projects.

[Inequity in neonatal care \(March 2023\)](#) Tommys and Sands Maternity Consortium carried out work on addressing inequity in neonatal care.

[Tackling Maternal Health Inequalities in Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities \(May 2023\)](#) Friends, Families and Travellers and Roma Support Group developed guidance on tackling inequalities for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller women in maternity services.

[Understanding women's lived experience of children's social care proceedings \(May 2023\)](#) Birth Companions conducted a project for the Tommy's and Sands Maternity Consortium exploring the impact of children's social care involvement on women's mental and physical health and wellbeing.

[VCSE Health and Wellbeing Alliance Resource Library – National Voices](#)

Influencing national policy

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Saving babies' lives progress report



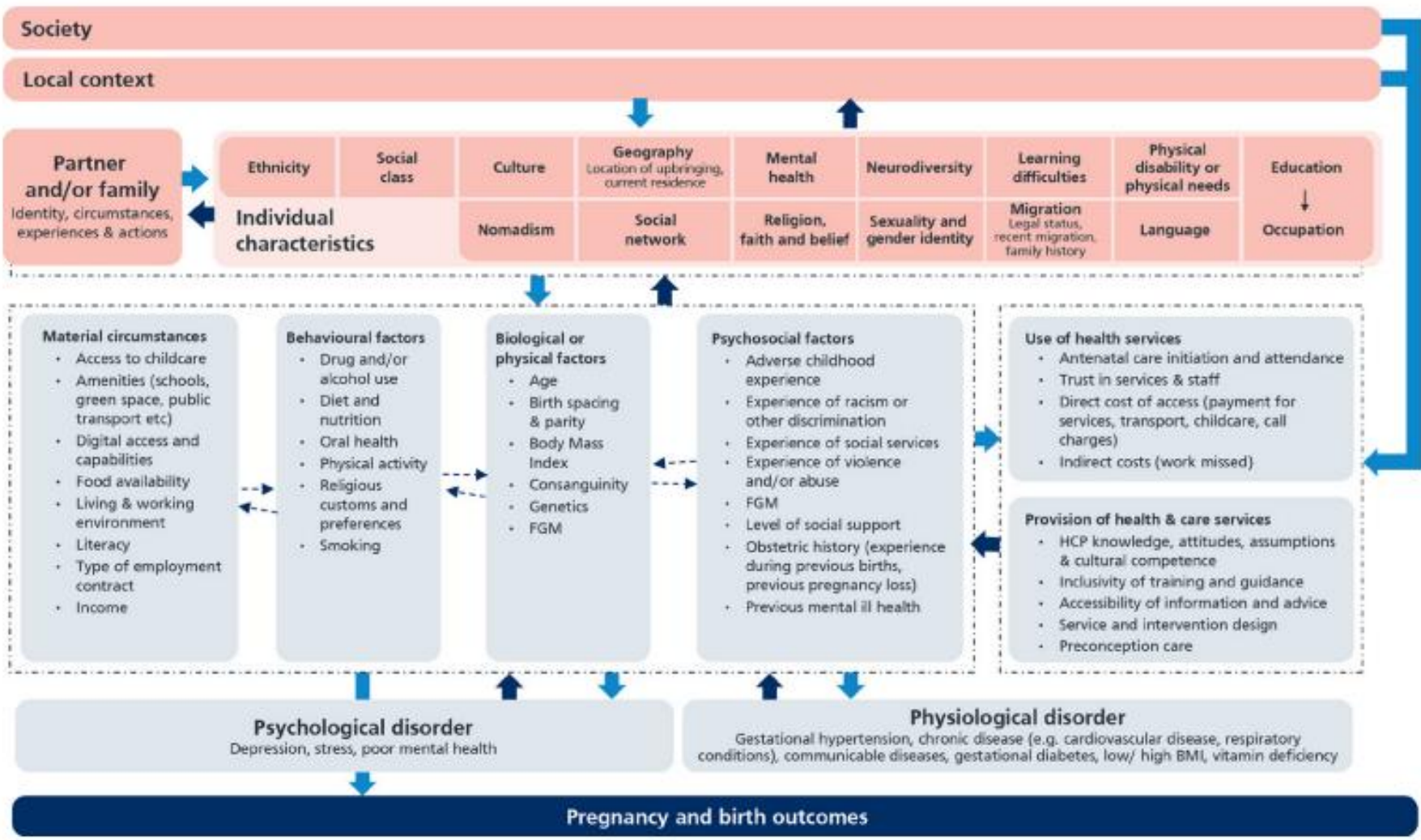
Saving Babies' Lives 2024:
A report on progress

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May 2024

- Governments across the UK must make clear commitments to eliminating inequalities in pregnancy and baby loss.
- Alongside long-term commitment from government, there are a range of immediate actions that could be taken to address potential drivers of inequality. This includes:
 - improving the collection of data on social risk factors
 - providing adequate and consistent support for the implementation of local plans to improve equity and equality.
- Schemes intended to support improvements in maternity safety should consider how to integrate efforts to tackle inequalities.



Translation and interpreting services in maternity and neonatal care

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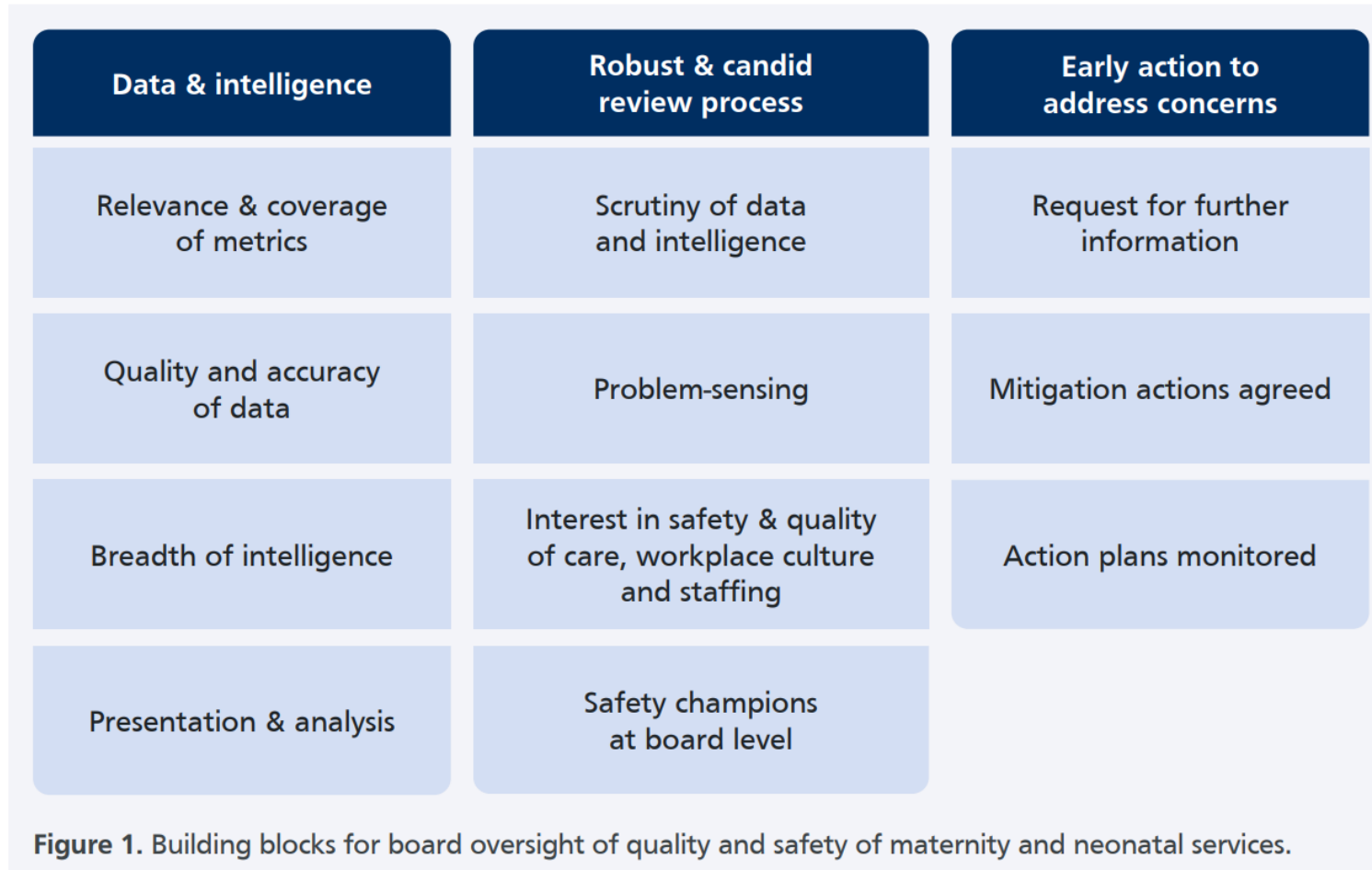
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Sands & Tommy's Joint Policy Unit briefing paper

Key messages

- Reports and reviews have highlighted issues with the use and quality of interpreting and translation services in maternity care, contributing to poor outcomes and avoidable harm.
- Existing guidance states that professional interpreting services must always be available when needed, and that family members should not be used in place of a professional interpreter.
- There is poor documentation of interpreting need, and inadequate response to requests for interpretation.
- Where interpreting and translation services are available, they are not used consistently. Barriers to this include limited appointment time and poor quality of services.
- Lack of high-quality interpreting services are also impacting personalisation of care and choice, and women and birthing people's ability to give informed consent to treatment and procedures.

Better board oversight needed to save babies' lives



Better board oversight needed to save babies' lives

- Guidance on the minimum metrics to be submitted to boards
- Better ward-to-board communication is required to contextualise data and findings
- Reports need to reflect on and contextualise metrics and trends over a longer time
- Review current systems and processes in each Trust and whether they allow boards to have meaningful oversight over the quality and safety of services
- Transparent reporting of the issues discussed outside of public board meetings, such as at sub-committee level
- A review of whether the maternity incentive scheme prioritises financial certainty and reputation management over a culture of learning and improvement
- Clarity over the role of Local Maternity and Neonatal Systems in oversight of quality and safety and the implications for Trust boards' responsibilities

Thank you

robert.wilson@sands.org.uk

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Breakout discussion: workforce culture and leadership

Please take a couple of minutes to answer our
mentimeter question:



Scan here to access mentimeter

Comfort break

**Breakout discussion:
patient access and
engagement & quality
and improvement**

Book now

Using quality improvement to enhance maternity and neonatal outcomes

Wednesday 10 July 2024

This upcoming event held by the Improvement programme, will explore how trusts are using quality improvements to address and improve maternity and neonatal outcomes.



Scan here to access our upcoming events

Tell us what you think

Your feedback helps us shape future events.

Please take five minutes to complete our evaluation.



Scan here to access our evaluation

Visit our website

Discover further topics on how to address health inequalities including:

- Anchor institutions
- Partnership and system working
- Approaches for reducing health inequalities
- Embedding prevention



Thank you for attending

Your feedback helps us shape future events.



Scan here to access our evaluation