



What maternity services are like in England

September 2024

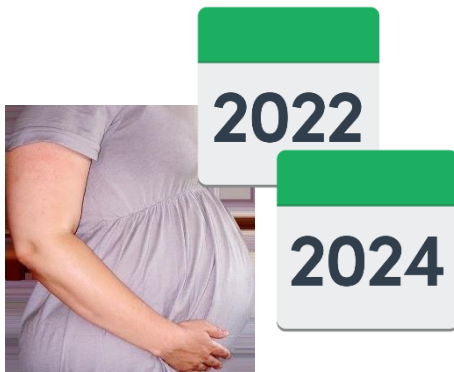


Easy read version of 'National
review of maternity services in
England 2022 to 2024'

About this report



We are the Care Quality Commission or CQC. We check health and care services like hospitals and care homes to make sure people get good care.



Over the last 2 years, we visited 131 maternity services to see what care is like for pregnant women and babies.



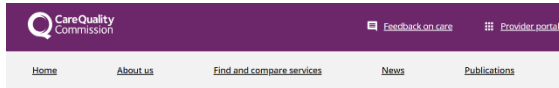
We have written a report about what we found.



While we found some examples of very good care, we are worried that too many women and babies are not getting the care they need or deserve.



Women told us they felt sad when they had a bad time giving birth.



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National review of maternity services in England 2022 to 2024



To help maternity services get better, we have added some pages to our website so that services can learn from each other.

Learning from patient safety events



Most services handled safety problems well.



But in some places, we are worried that problems that hurt women or babies might seem normal to staff.



Women need to have clear information so they understand what happened to them.

Risk assessment and triage



Maternity triage is an important first step for pregnant women who have an emergency or concern about their pregnancy.



Staff will ask questions to work out what needs to happen next to keep women and babies safe.



We found big differences in the way services ran triage and we are worried that not all women were checked when they needed to be.



In some cases, delays were so long that women decided to leave hospital before they were seen by a doctor or nurse.

Maternity staff



Getting new staff and keeping them in their roles is a problem for some maternity services.



This means there aren't always enough staff to care for women and babies.



High numbers of midwives are leaving and choosing to work in a different kind of job.



Fewer students are choosing to study midwifery at university.

Maternity wards



We found examples of maternity wards that did not meet people's needs.



Some wards did not have enough space.



In a small number of cases, wards were missing important equipment.

Inequalities and racism



We found big differences in the way services record information about people's ethnicity and background.



In some services, staff and people using the service were treated unfairly because of their ethnic background or problems around having English as a second language or not their preferred language.

Communication with women and families



Communication with women and their families is not always good enough.



This can make people feel scared and mean they do not have enough information about what is going to happen to them.



Women told us not having enough information made giving birth worse.

Find out more



You can see the full version of our report on our website at:

www.cqc.org.uk.



If you want to give feedback on your care – it can be good or bad – fill out our form at:

www.cqc.org.uk/givefeedback.



Or you can call us on:

03000 61 61 61