

Maternity improvement resource

The National maternity inspection programme aimed to give an up-to-date view of quality and safety across all maternity services. Between August 2022 and December 2023, every maternity location that had not been inspected before March 2021 was inspected, allowing us to identify common issues as well as good practice shared across the country.

Now that the inspection programme is complete, we are in a unique position of having an overview of the quality and safety of all maternity services in England.

We identified 4 themes to focus on for this improvement resource. We chose these themes because we identified that services often performed poorly in these areas, and we frequently had to take enforcement action. These are:

- triage
- incidents
- leadership and culture
- health equity.

These themes were not exhaustive and more information about our findings and themes can be found in our [national report](#).

The following guides are for staff, leaders at all levels, the board and integrated care boards. The guides outline our expectations for staff knowledge about their service and the key elements we want to see implemented. These guides aim to support staff at various levels in understanding what we consider to be the hallmarks of a good service.

Our integrated care system (ICS) level questions explore wider issues and trends, as we would expect ICS leaders and committees to have this high-level overview of maternity services across their system.

In this resource we refer to 'women', but we recognise that some transgender men, non-binary people and people with variations in sex characteristics or who are intersex may also use maternity services and experience some of the same issues.