

CQC publish National review of maternity services in England

19 September 2024  Rachael Bose

Today, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) released its National Review of Maternity Services report, a comprehensive review of 131 NHS maternity units inspected between August 2022 and December 2023. The report sheds light on persistent challenges and offers recommendations for urgent improvements in care delivery across England's maternity services.

A major finding from the report is that none of the inspected maternity services were rated as "outstanding" for safety. Almost 50% of the units were rated either "requires improvement" (47%) or "inadequate" (18%) in this critical area. Concerns include failures in reporting safety incidents, inconsistent risk assessments at triage, and delays caused by staffing shortages.

[Read the full report](#) →

Report findings

The report highlights several challenges faced by Trusts across England's maternity services including:

- Safety and Investigation Concerns
- Risk assessment and triage
- Staffing Shortages and Workforce Wellbeing
- Health Inequalities
- Inadequate Estates and Equipment.

Study recommendations

Recommendations from the study include the following:

- **Improve Incident Reporting and Learning:** The CQC calls for better systems to report, investigate, and learn from patient safety incidents. Services must also ensure clear communication with women about complications, helping them make informed decisions for future pregnancies
- **Address Staffing and Workforce Wellbeing:** NHS trusts must focus on recruiting and retaining staff to meet national safety standards. Equally important is fostering a supportive culture to ensure staff wellbeing and enhance job satisfaction, which could improve retention rates
- **Reduce Health Inequalities:** To tackle racial disparities, the CQC recommends improving the collection and use of demographic data and ensuring equality in care delivery. National guidelines should be developed to evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at reducing inequalities
- **Invest in Maternity Estates:** To create safer maternity environments, the report stresses the need for increased capital investment in maternity units. This would provide the necessary infrastructure and equipment to deliver high-quality care.

Our team

At Browne Jacobson we are committed to assisting [NHS Trusts](#) and [health care](#) organisations with delivering on their strategy to improve maternity outcomes. Our specialist maternity division can provide advice, support and training to organisations in order to assist with incorporating these recommendations to help reduce the number of incidents and create a safer maternity service. Please do get in touch to discuss how we may be able to help your organisation.

Browne Jacobson's [maternity resources hub](#) also provides resources and information about our specialist team and includes our contact details.

Key contact



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