

BABY LIFELINE WELCOMES THE NHS COMMITMENT TO COMPREHENSIVE MATERNITY TRAINING

Birmingham, 8th January 2019 - Baby Lifeline has given its support to the NHS Long Term Plan for maternity and neonatal services, which was published yesterday. In particular, [Baby Lifeline](#) welcomes the aim of comprehensively rolling out the Saving Babies' Lives Care Bundle throughout 2019. Baby Lifeline also welcomes the recognition of significant regional variation in outcomes and the focus on perinatal mental health.

Baby Lifeline campaigns for high-quality, expert-led, multi-professional and on-going training for maternity healthcare professionals. In 2018, the charity published [Mind the Gap](#), an investigation into the provision of maternity training for healthcare professionals across the UK. A key finding was that fewer than 10% of NHS Trusts had implemented the full Saving Babies' Lives care bundle. Baby Lifeline will repeat the research in 2020, to monitor progress.

The research also found that over one-quarter of trusts did not consider perinatal mental health training to be part of their mandatory requirement for training. The data for Mind the Gap came from Freedom of Information requests to NHS Trusts, so is based on what actually happened, not planned training.

Dr Bill Kirkup, Honorary President of Baby Lifeline, said, "The Saving Babies' Lives Care Bundle has been recommended since March 2016 and training of staff is key to full and consistent implementation. Full implementation of the bundle would make a significant impact in reducing the number of stillbirths. Given the disappointing results we reported in Mind the Gap, it is right the bundle has a prominent part in the NHS Long Term Plan."

Baby Lifeline estimates that the cost of external training to achieve the target of halving stillbirths and injuries at birth is £2.5 million per year. In contrast, a single maternity-based litigation claim, settled in October 2018, cost the NHS £37 million.

As well as campaigning for more training, Baby Lifeline provides training programmes to help the NHS achieve its goal of achieving 50% reductions in stillbirth, maternal mortality, neonatal mortality and serious brain injury by 2025. This target is the key focus of two Baby Lifeline training programmes: *Implementing Saving Babies' Lives* and *CTG Masterclass*. These flagship courses directly help NHS staff to deliver key elements of the bundle.

Professor James Walker, Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at St James University Hospital, Leeds; National Professional Advisor for Maternity at the Care Quality Commission; and Clinical Director of Maternity Investigations at the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch, is the Chair of Baby Lifeline's Multi-Professional Advisory Panel. He said, "Clinicians, midwives, and their Trusts now have the opportunity to access this interactive training day designed to equip staff with the knowledge and strategies to reduce the adverse outcomes outlined in Saving Babies' Lives by better prediction and prevention of preterm birth, growth restriction, and stillbirth."

Judy Ledger, CEO of Baby Lifeline, said, "As a national charity, Baby Lifeline is uniquely placed to deliver training and support to the NHS front line. We are ready to train and support NHS maternity and neonatal staff, as we have for over 30 years."

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About Baby Lifeline Registered Charity: 1006457

Baby Lifeline is a unique national charity supporting the care of pregnant women and new-born babies across the UK and worldwide. It raises funds to purchase much-

needed maternity equipment and is one of the leading providers of training to the medical and legal professions. It has attracted the support of leading health figures who sit on the charity's board, and A-list celebrities as patrons, including Dame Judi Dench and David Tennant.