



Maternity & Neonatal Bulletin: June 2026

The aim of this current awareness bulletin is to provide a digest of recent guidelines, reports, research and best practice on Maternity and Neonatal.

If you would like to receive any of our other bulletins please sign up here:

<https://www.nhslincslibrary.uk/bulletin-request-form/>

Ockenden review into maternity services at Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust: final report

This [independent review of maternity services at the Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust \(led by Donna Ockenden\)](#) considered the quality of care relating to newborn, infant and maternal harm at the trust. This report covers the findings, conclusions and essential actions of this independent review of maternity services. Based on a review of over 2,500 family cases that formed part of this investigation, the final report outlines: local actions for learning that staff at the trust must do; system-wide learnings; and immediate and essential actions to improve maternity and neonatal care.

Maternity

BMJ Best Practice updates

[Rh incompatibility](#) [updated May 2026]

[Placenta praevia](#) [updated May 2026]

[Premature labour](#) [updated May 2026]

UK guidelines

NICE:

[Ectopic pregnancy and miscarriage: diagnosis and management](#) [2019, updated June 2026]

[Intrapartum care](#) [2023, updated June 2026]

[Postnatal care](#) [2021, updated June 2026]

RCOG: [Multiple Pregnancy Following Assisted Conception](#) (Scientific Impact Paper No. 22, 2026 Third Edition)

UK Health Security Agency: [Carbon monoxide \(CO\): antenatal checks algorithm for midwives](#)

UK National Screening Committee: [Review of the effectiveness of the UK Infectious Diseases in Pregnancy Screening programmes](#)

Cochrane reviews

[Planned early birth versus expectant management for hypertensive disorders from 34 weeks' gestation to term](#) [May 2026]



Equality, diversity and inclusion

These [anti-racism principles from the Nursing and Midwifery Council](#) set out some of the ways educators, organisations, registrants and employers can address concerns around inequities in care and racism across health and social care practice, education, and regulation. The principles are designed to: strengthen cultural safety, curiosity and respect in practice and education; and explicitly advance meaningful, sustained anti-racist, bias-aware practice. It is the NMC's expectation that universities and healthcare organisations will adopt these principles in course content, training and service provision.

This [report from the Patients Association](#) contains feedback from focus groups the Patients Association ran across six language backgrounds – Arabic, Bengali, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian and Urdu – and research on those who speak English as an additional language, highlighting the numerous barriers to care that they face. Some of the barriers highlighted include a need for quality and personalisation in translations, reliance on community members as informal interpreters and medical jargon as a barrier even with interpretation.

Madeley, A.M., Earle, S. and O'Dell, L., 2026. **Reproductive identity expression, reinforcement and defence: A constructivist grounded theory of non-normative pregnancy and childbirth decisions in the UK.** *Midwifery*, p.104873. Available here: [Midwifery](#)

Marpaung, Z.T., Al Farizi, S. and Jayanti, R.D., 2026. **Overcoming sociocultural barriers to the use of maternal and neonatal health services.** *British Journal of Midwifery*, 34(5), pp.282-287. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Stevenson, K., Ogunlana, K., et al. 2026. **Care Received by Migrant Women Who Died During or After Pregnancy: A National Confidential Case Note Review.** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)

Mental health

Daley, D., Mackenzie, R. and Keynejad, R., 2026. **Perinatal mental health training and supervision for primary care and community-based staff: a systematic review.** *The British journal of general practice*, 76(suppl 1). Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Dosanjh, S. and Shah, S., 2026. **What is the effectiveness of primary care interventions in managing postnatal depression in the UK?** *The British journal of general practice*, 76(suppl 1). Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Erwin, E., 2026. **Complexities in perinatal mental health care: a salutogenic approach.** *British Journal of Midwifery*, 34(5), pp.288-294. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Hoffmeister, A., McCreery, T., et al. 2026. **Using positive affirmation cards to increase confidence and alleviate fears in the perinatal period.** *British Journal of Midwifery*, 34(5), pp.248-254. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Maternal mortality

Faith, J., Martopullo, I., et al. 2026. **Global, regional, and national levels and trends in maternal mortality, progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, and mortality from COVID-19 infection in pregnant women, 1990–2023: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2023.** *The Lancet Obstetrics, Gynaecology, & Women's Health*, 2(5), pp.e375-e424. Available here: [The Lancet](#)



Sadler, C., 2026. **Maternal mortality in the UK.** *British Journal of Midwifery*, 34(5), pp.296-297. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Antenatal care

New [analysis by Action on Smoking and Health \(ASH\)](#) estimates that since 2020, accelerated declines in maternal smoking have helped prevent nearly 2,000 babies from being born preterm or with low birthweight, as well as 70 cases of stillbirth, neonatal death and sudden infant death. The analysis uses new NHS data, released today showing that fewer women in England are smoking during pregnancy than ever before, with 4.2% recorded as smokers in 2025/26, down from 6.1% the previous year. In 2020/21 the figure was 9.6%.

Interventions

Forrest, A.D., Mahesh, M., Fishman, E.K. and Blakemore, K.J., 2026. **Radiologic examinations in pregnancy: a critical appraisal of radiation and contrast risks.** *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine*, 39(1), p.2668856. Available here: [The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine](#)

Complications

Arkorful, J., Nyamson, J., Adu-Bredu, T. et al. 2026. **Association between lateral placenta and adverse maternal and perinatal outcomes: a systematic review and meta-analysis.** *BJOG*, pp. 1–11. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Badr, A. and Vardy, A., 2026. **Uterine Rupture Cases Over 15 Years in a District General Hospital: A Retrospective Case Series.** *Reproductive, Female and Child Health*, 5(2), p.e70080. Available here: [Reproductive, Female and Child Health](#)

D'Alberti, E., Granieri, C., et al. 2026. **Fetal Growth Restriction at a Universal Late Third-Trimester Scan and Relationship With Adverse Outcome: Retrospective Cohort Study.** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)

Dayan-Schwartz, A., Zilberlicht, A., et al. 2026. **Ovarian pregnancy: clinical characteristics, diagnostic challenges, and sonographic features—a multicenter case series with narrative literature overview.** *Archives of Gynecology and Obstetrics*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Haddadi, M., Jafarabady, K., et al. 2026. **The association between endometrial thickness and ectopic pregnancy among women who underwent in vitro fertilization, systematic review and meta-analysis.** *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine*, 39(1), p.2670736. Available here: [The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine](#)

Minopoli, M., Martínez-Varea, A., et al. 2025. **Effect of Targeted Aspirin Administration Based on First Trimester Combined Screening for Preeclampsia on Preterm Birth: An Interrupted Time Series Analysis.** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)

Pegorie, C., Chmielewska, B., et al. 2026. **The TRUFFLE monitoring protocol for early-onset fetal growth restriction: A clinical effectiveness study.** *Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica Scandinavica*. Available here: [Acta Obstetrica Gynecologica Scandinavica](#)

Salvi, S., Mandolini, D., et al. 2026. **Eclampsia Incidence, Management and Outcomes Across Multi-Country Surveillance Cohorts: Individual Participant Data Meta-Analysis.** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)



Zhang, L., Bi, S., Chen, L., et al. 2026. **Prophylactic tranexamic acid for the prevention of postpartum haemorrhage in women with placenta praevia: multicentre, double blind, randomised, placebo controlled, phase 3 trial.** *BMJ*, 393. Available here: [BMJ](#)

Labour & birth

Gent, J., Oliver, E., et al. 2026. **Induction of labor versus cesarean section after 36+ 0 weeks in twin pregnancy: A review of maternal and neonatal outcomes.** *Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica Scandinavica*. Available here: [Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica](#)

Kovalenko, M., Zamagni, G., et al. 2026. **Association between maternal and fetal characteristics and levator hiatus dimensions in the second stage of labor.** *Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica Scandinavica*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Pandey, P., Shabil, M., et al. 2026. **Association of weekend delivery with adverse neonatal outcomes: a systematic review and meta-analysis.** *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine*, 39(1), p.2666478. Available here: [The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine](#)

Pilarski, N., Jones, I., et al. 2026. **"It's your body... so it's just nice to know what they're putting in it" A qualitative study of women's views and experiences of caesarean section, antibiotic use and infection.** *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Tan, S.Y., Au, N., et al. 2026. **Oral misoprostol (PGE1) vs vaginal dinoprostone (PGE2) for labor induction: individual participant data meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials.** *Ultrasound in Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 67(5), pp.579-589. Available here: [Ultrasound in Obstetrics & Gynecology](#)

van der Krogt, L., Story, L., Suff, N. and Shennan, A., 2026. **Clinical characteristics associated with very preterm delivery despite transabdominal cerclage: a cohort study.** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)

Webb, R., Uddin, N., Constantinou, G. and Ayers, S., 2026. **Risk factors for birth trauma and postpartum posttraumatic stress in the United Kingdom: Results from the international survey of childbirth-related trauma.** *Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica Scandinavica*. Available here: [Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica Scandinavica](#)

Zethelius, M., Bergman, L., et al. 2026. **Can universal cervical length screening with vaginal progesterone for a short cervix reduce preterm birth? A systematic review and meta-analyses.** *Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica Scandinavica*. Available here: [Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica](#)

Pregnancy loss

Miscarriage is the most common complication of early pregnancy in the UK. Current NHS practice only routinely offers follow-up care, that could help prevent the loss of another baby, after three losses despite the risks of pregnancy complications and long-term impact. The [Tommy's Graded Model of Miscarriage Care](#) addresses the gap in care by offering targeted support after every miscarriage.

Infant Feeding

Cao, Z., Huang, M., et al. 2026. **Effects of antenatal breast milk expression on maternal and infant outcomes: a systematic review and meta-analysis.** *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*.



Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Neonatal

UK guidelines

NICE: [Neonatal infection: antibiotics for prevention and treatment](#) [2021, updated May 2026]

Cochrane reviews

[Early erythropoiesis-stimulating agents in preterm or low-birthweight infants](#) [May 2026]

[Olfactory stimulation for promoting development and preventing morbidity in preterm infants](#) [May 2026]

Recently published research

Arul, G.S., Singh, A., et al. 2026. **Clinicians' attitudes to the West Midlands damage control surgery pathway for severe necrotising enterocolitis.** *Archives of Disease in Childhood-Fetal and Neonatal Edition*. Available here: [ADC Fetal and Neonatal Edition](#)

Cirelli, C., Chehrazi, M., et al. 2026. **Postmortem examination after deaths in neonatal units in England and Wales, 2017–2022: a national observational study.** *Archives of Disease in Childhood-Fetal and Neonatal Edition*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Devlin, L.A., Babineau, D.C., et al. 2026. **Symptom-Based Dosing for Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal: The OPTimize NOW Randomized Clinical Trial.** *JAMA*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Dongre, S., Gallo, D. and Milan, A., 2025. **Developing neonatal point-of-care lung ultrasound training using Kern's six-step approach: the experience from a UK tertiary neonatal unit.** *Pediatrics & Neonatology*. Available here: [Pediatrics & Neonatology](#)

Fatemian, H., Tabrizi, R., et al. 2026. **Impact of caffeine on neurodevelopmental outcomes in preterm infants: A systematic review and meta-analysis.** *Pediatrics & Neonatology*. Available here: [Pediatrics & Neonatology](#)

Mitchell, J.M., Rodrigues, C.L., et al. 2026. **Development of a prediction model for mortality in infants undergoing therapeutic hypothermia for neonatal encephalopathy.** *Journal of Perinatology*, pp.1-8. Available here: [Journal of Perinatology](#)

Newton, L., Budhdeo, R. and Bhujel, N., 2026. **An overview of oral conditions in newborns.** *British Journal of Midwifery*, 34(5), pp.276-281. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Pandey, P., Shabil, M., et al. 2026. **Association of weekend delivery with adverse neonatal outcomes: a systematic review and meta-analysis.** *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine*, 39(1), p.2666478. Available here: [The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine](#)

Rees, P., Gale, C., et al. 2026. **Trends in the incidence of low-grade intraventricular haemorrhage among preterm babies: a national cohort study.** *Archives of Disease in Childhood-Fetal and Neonatal Edition*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net



Wu, Y., Merhar, S.L., Bann, C.M., et al. 2026. **Antenatal Opioid Exposure and Cerebral Cortical Maturation in Newborns.** *JAMA Network Open*, 9(5), p.e2614115. Available here: [JAMA Network Open](#)