



Maternity & Neonatal Bulletin

March 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

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Maternity

UK guidelines

BAPM: [Perinatal Management of Extreme Preterm Birth Before 27 Weeks of Gestation \(2026\): a BAPM framework for practice](#)

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

Maternity services

This [report from the National Maternity and Neonatal Investigations team](#) sets out the background and changing context in which maternity and neonatal care is provided. It examines **six factors that could be contributing to the pressures** on the maternity and neonatal system. These are: capacity pressures; culture and leadership; racism and discrimination; poor responses and lack of accountability when things go wrong; the quality of estates; and workforce. The report concludes with next steps

Years of inquiries have exposed failings in maternity care in England that suggest problems are systemic. As the sector awaits Baroness Amos's final report from a national investigation, [this explainer from The Nuffield Trust](#) reviews **current outcomes, progress, and efforts to improve maternity and neonatal care**. It finds a troubling picture, with maternal mortality rising, progress stalling on many metrics, and inequalities persisting. It suggests what might be needed to ensure better progress.



Equality, diversity and inclusion

Brennan-Tovey, K., Sarma, K., et al. 2026. **Professional perspectives on barriers to accessing maternity care in England: a qualitative study.** *BMC pregnancy and childbirth*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Madell, S., 2026. **Multilingual communication and the challenge posed across the perinatal journey: a qualitative study.** *British Journal of Midwifery*, 34(2), pp.66-73. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Rayment-Jones, H., Burton, S., et al. 2026. **The Role of Ethnicity and Migration in Perinatal Inequalities: A Retrospective Cohort Study.** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)

Mental health

Hu, W., Hu, Y., et al. 2026. **Effects of stepped care on depression outcomes in perinatal women: a systematic review and meta-analysis.** *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Kuang, Y., Meng, M., et al. 2026. **The impact of home care interventions on postpartum depression symptoms: a systematic review and meta-analysis.** *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*. Available here: [BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth](#)

Scarth, B., Derakhshan, E., et al. 2026. **A Systematic Review of Interventions for Perinatal Suicidal Behaviour in Women.** *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 33(1), pp.195-204. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Community care

Fernandez Turienzo, C., Burton, S., et al. 2025. **The Impact of Community-Based Midwife Continuity of Care Models for Women Living in Areas of Social Disadvantage and Ethnic Diversity in the United Kingdom: A Prospective Cohort Study.** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)

Pharmacology

The [Specialist Pharmacy Service advises](#) that gabapentin or pregabalin can be used during breastfeeding with appropriate infant monitoring, with gabapentin preferred due to greater evidence of safety.

Samara, A. and Khalil, A., 2026. **Paracetamol in Pregnancy: Reassurance Amidst Uncertainty.** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)

Complications

Ectopic pregnancy

Nijjar, S., De Braud, L.V., et al. 2025. **Caesarean Scar Ectopic Pregnancy in Early Gestation: A Scoping Review of Definitions and Diagnostic Approach.** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)



Fetal growth restriction

Byrne, Z., Brennan, S., et al. 2026. **Maternal sFlt-1/PlGF Ratio to Distinguish Pathological Fetal Growth Restriction from Constitutional Smallness: Systematic Review.** *BJOG*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

D'Alberty, 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*, p. 1–10. Available here: [BJOG](#)

Hypertension

Wang, S. et al. 2026. **Maternal hypertension and survival without bronchopulmonary dysplasia in preterm infants: a meta-analysis of cohort studies.** *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine*, 39(1). Available here: [The Journal of MFN Medicine](#)

Wu, Y., Guo, K., et al. 2026. **The preventive effects of different interventions on gestational hypertension: incidence and network meta-analysis.** *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine*, 39(1). Available here: [Journal of MFN Medicine](#)

Infections

Ahmadi, S., Ardalani, P., et al. 2026. **The effect of Helicobacter pylori infection on pregnancy and fetal complications: a systematic review and meta-analysis.** *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine*, 39(1), p.2635272. Available here: [Journal of MFN Medicine](#)

Pre-eclampsia

Ghartey, J., Combs, C.A., et al. 2026. **Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine Special Statement: Updated checklists for preeclampsia risk-factor screening to guide recommendations for prophylactic low-dose aspirin.** *Pregnancy*, 2(2), p.e70212. Available here: [Pregnancy](#)

Irby, M.N., Hsu, C.D., et al. 2026. **Present status of sFLT1 and PlGF as diagnostic and therapeutic targets for preeclampsia.** *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine*, 39(1), p.2648178. Available here: [The Journal of MFN Medicine](#)

Spina Bifida

Banh, S., Saenz, A., et al. 2026. **Open Fetal Versus Postnatal Repair of Spina Bifida Aperta—A Comparison of Neonatal Outcomes.** *Prenatal Diagnosis*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Stroke

Miller, E.C., Bello, N.A., 2026. **Prevention and treatment of maternal stroke in pregnancy and postpartum: A scientific statement from the American Heart Association.** *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, pp.10-1097. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net



Twin pregnancy

Yao, R., Hoskins, I.A., et al. 2026. **Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine Special Statement: Updated checklists for management of monochorionic twin pregnancy.** *Pregnancy*, 2(2), p.e70213. Available here: [Pregnancy](#)

Labour & birth

This [report from Birthrights](#) finds that home birth services are being restricted, suspended and frequently interrupted up and down the UK. The report explores these restrictions, and how they disproportionately impact minoritised or marginalised communities and sets out Birthrights' recommendations on what must be done.

Al-Qudah, A.A., Aleidi, M., et al. 2026. **Elective induction versus expectant management for suspected large-for-gestational-age fetuses: a systematic review and meta-analysis.** *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Bansal, S., Uus, A.U., et al. 2025. **Low-Field Magnetic Resonance Imaging of the Late Gestation Cervix and Birth Outcome Correlation: A Prospective Cohort Study.** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)

Edwards, H.B., Sillero-Rejon, C., et al. 2026. **Implementation of national guidelines on antenatal magnesium sulfate for neonatal neuroprotection: extended evaluation of the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the National PReCePT Programme in England.** *BMJ Quality & Safety*, 35(2), pp.95-105. Available here: [BMJ Quality & Safety](#)

Hedawy, S., Aldalahmeh, S., et al. 2026. **Effectiveness of oral dydrogesterone compared to placebo in reducing the risk of preterm birth: a systematic review and meta-analysis.** *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*. Available here: [BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth](#)

Makino, Y., Hosokawa, Y., et al. 2026. **Intrauterine balloon tamponade versus uterine gauze packing for postpartum hemorrhage: A systematic review and meta-analysis.** *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Medford, E., Lane, S., et al. 2026. **Objective Cervical Stiffness Assessment Using the Pregnolia System Prior to Induction of Labour: The CASPAR Feasibility Cohort Study.** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)

Parris, D., Xue, Y., et al. 2025. **Characterising Forces Applied During the Simulated Management of Impacted Fetal Head: Pre-Clinical Methods Study.** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)

Sudhakar, V., Olakotan, O., et al. 2026. **Improving the obstetric anal sphincter injury care bundle: a call for inclusive preventive strategies.** *British Journal of Midwifery*, 34(2), pp.113-116. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

van der Krogt, L., Story, L., et al. 2026. **Clinical Characteristics Associated With Very Preterm Delivery Despite Transabdominal Cerclage: A Cohort Study.** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)



Pregnancy loss

Matthews, R.J., Vidyula, K.S., et al. 2026. **Registration of Stillbirth After Early Fetal Death: A National Population-Based Analysis.** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)

Woolner, A.M., Shestopaloff, K. and Heazell, A.E., 2026. **Pregnancy Outcomes After Second Trimester Pregnancy Loss and Termination for Medical Reasons Before 24 Weeks: A Historical Cohort Study [PASTeL-2].** *BJOG*. Available here: [BJOG](#)

Infant feeding

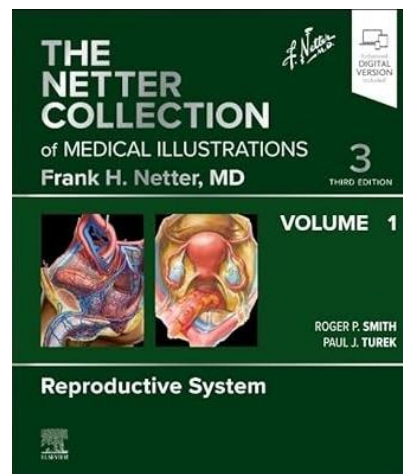
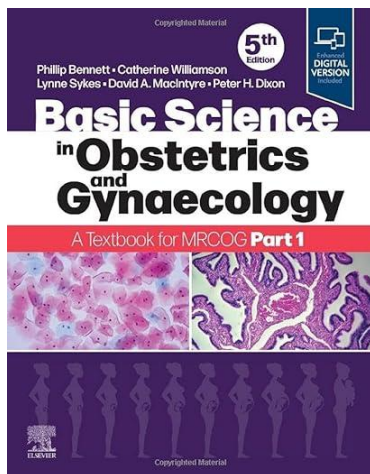
Mitchell, V., McFadden, A. and Buell, S., 2026. **Exploring influences on infant-feeding decisions among mothers with learning disabilities: A scoping review.** *Midwifery*, p.104741. Available here: [Midwifery](#)

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Neonatal

UK guidelines

BAPM: [Perinatal Management of Extreme Preterm Birth Before 27 Weeks of Gestation \(2026\): a BAPM framework for practice](#)

This [position statement from the Neonatal and Paediatric Pharmacists Group](#) is designed to support the safe, consistent administration of enteral calcium, phosphate, potassium and zinc supplementation using a portion of the available, licensed effervescent tablets. This has been written in response to the fact that there are currently no licensed oral liquid calcium, phosphate, potassium and zinc products available in the UK.

Cochrane reviews

[Enteral lipid supplements for the prevention and treatment of parenteral nutrition-associated liver disease in infants](#)

The evidence is very uncertain about the effect of enteral lipids on the prevention of PNALD during the hospital stay and in the first year of life. There may be little to no difference in feeding intolerance or time to achieve full enteral feeds. They may decrease the length of stay and likely do not reduce or increase mortality up to discharge or during the first year of life in infants at risk for PNALD.

Recently published research

Banh, S., Saenz, A., et al. 2026. **Open Fetal Versus Postnatal Repair of Spina Bifida Aperta—A Comparison of Neonatal Outcomes.** *Prenatal Diagnosis*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Farley, H., et al. 2026. **Change in early respiratory management of infants born at less than 30 weeks' gestation in England and Wales: an observational cohort study.** *Archives of Disease in Childhood-Fetal and Neonatal Edition*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary.request@nhs.net

Gentle, S.J., et al. 2026. **Evolution of oxygen therapy in preterm infants.** *Archives of Disease in Childhood-Fetal and Neonatal Edition*. Available here: [ADC Fetal and Neonatal Edition](#)

Munn-Bookless, K., Sands, A. and Karayiannis, S., 2026. **Twin congenital heart disease in the setting of twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome.** *Archives of Disease in Childhood-Fetal and Neonatal Edition*. Available on request: ulth.nhslincslibrary@nhs.net

Shin, S.H., Kim, H.J. and Heo, J.S., 2025. **Short-term and long-term effects of vitamin D supplementation for preterm infants: a systematic review and meta-analysis.** *Journal of Perinatology*, pp.1-12. Available here: [Journal of Perinatology](#)

Wang, S. et al. 2026. **Maternal hypertension and survival without bronchopulmonary dysplasia in preterm infants: a meta-analysis of cohort studies.** *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine*, 39(1). Available here: [The Journal of MFN Medicine](#)

Young, A.N., Karampatsas, K., et al. 2026. **Current knowledge and future perspectives on management and prevention of group B streptococcus in neonates and young infants.** *Archives of Disease in Childhood-Fetal and Neonatal Edition*. Available here: [ADC Fetal and Neonatal Edition](#)



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[Avery's Diseases of the Newborn](#)

[Fanaroff and Martin's Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine: Diseases of the Fetus and Infant](#)

[Neonatology Questions and Controversies: Hematology and Transfusion Medicine](#)

[Neonatology Questions and Controversies: Infectious Disease, Immunology, and Pharmacology](#)

[Neonatology Questions and Controversies: Neonatal Hemodynamics](#)

[Neonatology Questions and Controversies: Neurology](#)

[Neonatology Questions and Controversies: Renal, Fluid and Electrolyte Disorders](#)

[Neonatology Questions and Controversies: The Newborn Lung](#)

[Remington and Klein's Infectious Diseases of the Fetus and Newborn Infant](#)

[Volpe's Neurology of the Newborn](#)

