



Maternity & Neonatal Bulletin

September 2025

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

BMJ Best Practice updates

[Routine antenatal care](#)

To access BMJ Best Practice, log in via your institution using OpenAthens—search for 'NHS in England' and enter your credentials. If you don't have an account, you can register at openathens.nice.org.uk

UK guidelines

RCOG: [Care of Women with Preterm Prelabour Rupture of the Membranes Prior to 24+0 Weeks of Gestation \(Scientific Impact Paper No. 76\)](#)

International guidelines

European Association of Perinatal Medicine: [European guidelines on management of arrested or protracted labor in nulliparous women](#)

The Global Consensus Group for Pregnancy and IBD: [Global consensus statement on the management of pregnancy in inflammatory bowel disease](#)

Cochrane Reviews

- [Effects of antibiotic prophylaxis during labour on maternal and neonatal outcomes in women planning vaginal birth](#)
- [Prophylactic manual rotation of the fetal head \(manual rotation alone\) to reduce operative delivery and complications for mother and babies](#)
- [Surgical versus medical methods for second-trimester induced abortion](#)

Maternity services

The [HSSIB's exploratory review of maternity and neonatal services](#) highlights systemic issues in governance, risk recognition, and professional standards, identifying key areas for future investigation to support a forthcoming national inquiry into patient safety and care quality.

The [NHS Digital Maternity and Neonatal Data Hub](#) provides centralised access to a wide range of data, reports, and guidance on NHS-funded maternity services in England,



supporting analysis, service improvement, and informed decision-making

This [NHS England framework](#) outlines how genomics is revolutionising healthcare by enabling faster diagnoses and treatments, and sets out a three-year plan to build a genomically skilled nursing and midwifery workforce across all roles and practice areas.

The [NMC's Principles for Supporting Women's Choices in Maternity Care](#) aim to promote safer, person-centred care by guiding midwives and organisations in respecting and supporting informed decisions made by women, even when those choices fall outside standard care pathways.

The [revised Perinatal Quality Oversight Model \(PQOM\) from NHS England](#) offers a structured and consistent framework for monitoring perinatal services and gathering insights to support continuous improvement.

Jovanović, N., et al. 2025. **Understanding patient pathways to Mother and Baby Units: a longitudinal retrospective service evaluation in the UK.** *Health and Social Care Delivery Research*, pp.1-17. Available in full here: [Health and Social Care Delivery Research](#)

Workforce & education

NHS England is calling on registered nurses, midwives, nursing associates and students across England to help [shape the Professional Strategy for Nursing and Midwifery in England](#). They are asked to share their views, experiences and ideas by completing this survey: Defining the next era of nursing and midwifery. The survey will close at midnight on Monday 29 September 2025.

The **Maternity and Neonatal Independent Senior Advocate (MNISA) role**, introduced across England, supports families affected by serious maternity incidents and aims to improve NHS care by ensuring their voices are heard. This [evaluation from the Nuffield Trust](#) assesses how the role has been implemented and its impact on families and the healthcare system.

The [UK government has launched a Graduate Guarantee](#) to ensure every newly qualified nurse and midwife in England has access to a job, unlocking thousands of new roles and supporting a smooth transition from training to employment as part of wider NHS workforce reforms.

Clinical placements are a cornerstone of health care education and workforce development. This [guide from NHS Employers](#) aims to provide employers with practical examples to help manage and diversify their placement capacity whilst providing an excellent student learning experiences. Evidence shows that students who have a good placement experience will normally apply for a position within that organisation or specialty at the end of their training.

Romer, C., et al. 2025. **Midwives' experiences of developing advanced clinical practice roles in complex pregnancy care.** *British Journal of Midwifery*, 33(7), pp.368-



375. Available in full on request: lesley.firth@nhs.net

Equality, diversity and inclusion

This [report from Five X More](#) captures the lived experiences of Black women across the UK who have been pregnant or given birth in the last four years. It explores the quality of care, communication with professionals, discrimination and what still needs to change. The report finds that Black women are still facing barriers and the system must do better.

Due to variations in systems used across NHS Trusts, booking referral forms and data collection in maternity and neonatal services sometimes don't reflect LGBTQIA+ experiences. This can affect the ability of midwives and healthcare professionals to provide personalised, inclusive care. In response, [LGBT Mummies have co-produced an LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Maternity Notes document](#).

Al-Mubarak, A., et al. et al. 2025. **The Impact of Culture on Access to and Utilisation of Maternity Care Amongst Muslim Women in High-Income Countries: A Qualitative Systematic Review.** *BJOG*. Available in full here: [BJOG](#)

Mental health

Clarke, L.A. and Anderson, G., 2025. **Using therapeutic art practice to address the continuing escalation of perinatal mental ill health.** *British Journal of Midwifery*, 33(7), pp.408-414. Available in full on request: lesley.firth@nhs.net

Antenatal care

[NHS England has launched an online self-referral form for maternity services](#). This will make it possible for newly pregnant women to refer themselves directly to local maternity services without seeing a GP first, and to arrange their first midwife appointments more quickly.

[The British Society for Immunology has launched a new guide on vaccinations during pregnancy](#), designed to support healthcare professionals and expectant parents with clear, evidence-based information.

Allison, S., et al. 2025. **Smoking cessation in pregnancy: exploring service users' lived experiences.** *British Journal of Midwifery*, 33(7), pp.382-389. Available in full on request: lesley.firth@nhs.net

Pharmacology

Fernandes Dias, M., et al. 2025. **Progesterone in pregnancy and neonatal outcomes: A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials.** *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*. Available in full on request: lesley.firth@nhs.net

Complications

Bonanni, G., et al. 2025. **Guidelines on placenta accreta spectrum disorders: a systematic review.** *JAMA network open*, 8(7). Available in full here: [JAMA Network Open](#)



Kalogeropoulou, M.-S., et al. 2025. **Management of cytomegalovirus infection in pregnancy.** *The Obstetrician & Gynaecologist*, 27, pp. 207-218. Available in full here: [The Obstetrician & Gynaecologist](#)

Ladouceur, M., et al. 2025. **Refining current risk stratification guidelines for pregnant women with Fontan circulation: lessons from PROFAT registry.** *European Journal of Preventive Cardiology*. Available in full on request: lesley.firth@nhs.net

Martins, M.A.B., et al. 2025. **Operative versus nonoperative treatment of acute cholecystitis during pregnancy: a systematic review and meta-analysis.** *Surgical Endoscopy*, pp.1-9. Available in full on request: lesley.firth@nhs.net

Nanda, S., et al. 2025. **Cancer in pregnancy: FIGO Best practice advice and narrative review.** *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*. Available in full here: [International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics](#)

Nelson-Piercy, C., et al. 2025. **Pregnancy-associated acute kidney injury—consensus report of the 32nd Acute Disease Quality Initiative workgroup.** *Nature Reviews Nephrology*, pp.1-14. Available in full here: [Nature Reviews Nephrology](#)

Paudel, A., et al. 2025. **The effect of patient education on maternal fasting blood glucose in gestational diabetes mellitus in randomized controlled trials: a systematic review and meta-analysis.** *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine*, 38(1), p.2523582. Available in full here: [The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine](#)

Oppermann, M.L.R., et al. 2025. **Prevalence of congenital anomalies in pregnancies complicated by type 2 diabetes: Systematic review and meta-analysis.** *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*. Available in full on request: lesley.firth@nhs.net

Villalaín, C., et al. 2025. **Clinical practice guidance for the management of fetal growth restriction: an expert review.** *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine*, 38(1), p.2526111. Available in full here: [The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine](#)

Villalaín, C., et al. 2025. **Screening and diagnosis of fetal growth restriction: an expert review.** *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine*, 38(1), p.2526108. Available in full here: [The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine](#)

Labour & birth

[NHS England has published national guidance on managing birth notifications following an unassisted birth.](#) This new guidance supports statutory obligations under Section 269 of the NHS Act and introduces a centralised notification process to bring consistency and clarity across systems. An unassisted birth refers to instances where a woman consciously chooses to give birth without the support of a registered healthcare



professional - distinct from an unplanned 'born before arrival' birth.

Barnea, E.R., et al. 2025. **FIGO good practice recommendations for vaginal birth after cesarean section.** *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*. Available in full here: [International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics](#).

Flanagan, M., et al. 2025. **The Effectiveness of Oxytocin for Preventing Postpartum Haemorrhage: An Individual Participant Data Meta-Analysis.** *BJOG*. Available in full here: [BJOG](#)

Hunter, B., et al. 2025. **Impact of Implementation Tools for Spontaneous Preterm Birth Guidelines: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.** *BJOG*. Available in full here: [BJOG](#)

Li, Y., et al. 2025. **Perioperative use of esketamine for the prevention of postpartum depression after cesarean section: a meta-analysis.** *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*, 25(1), p.775. Available in full here: [BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth](#)

Taychaburapanone, P., et al. 2025. **Transperineal ultrasonography angle of progression measurement as a predictor of successful labor in pregnancy with induction of labor: a systematic review and meta-analysis.** *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine*, 38(1), p.2537231. Available in full here: [The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine](#)

Wan, L., et al. 2025. **Effectiveness of active warming to prevent shivering during elective cesarean delivery under spinal anesthesia: A systematic review and meta-analysis.** *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*. Available in full on request: lesley.firth@nhs.net

Miscarriage and stillbirth

Bakhbakhi, D., et al. 2025. **A core outcome set for stillbirth care: an international consensus study.** *BJOG*. Available in full here: [BJOG](#)

Postnatal care

Mammoliti, K.M., et al. 2025. **When Is Postpartum Haemorrhage Treatment Initiated? A Nested Observational Study Within the E-MOTIVE Trial.** *BJOG*. Available in full here: [BJOG](#)

Ramasauskaite, D., et al. 2025. **FIGO call to action: Multisectoral approach to postpartum hemorrhage.** *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*. Available in full here: [International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics](#)

Stewart, C., et al. 2025. **Factors Associated with Contraceptive Initiation and Use Among Women Who Have Given Birth in the Last Year: Findings From the 2023 Women's Reproductive Health Survey.** *BJOG*. Available in full here: [BJOG](#)



Zhu, J., et al. 2025. **Comparative effectiveness of rehabilitation therapies for diastasis recti abdominis: A systematic review and Bayesian network meta-analysis.** *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*. Available in full on request: lesley.firth@nhs.net

Infant feeding

[Quarterly and annual data sets from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities](#) about the number and proportion of infants who have been fully, partially or not at all breastfed at 6 to 8 weeks.

Specialist Pharmacy Service: [Using antipsychotics during breastfeeding.](#)

Quetiapine is the preferred second-generation, and haloperidol the preferred first-generation antipsychotic when breastfeeding full term, healthy infants.

Fan, H.S.L., et al. 2025. **Effect of expressed human milk feeding on breastfeeding duration in term infants: A systematic review and meta-analysis.** *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*. Available in full on request: lesley.firth@nhs.net

Neonatal

Cochrane Reviews

- [Amplitude-integrated electroencephalography compared with conventional video-electroencephalography for detection of neonatal seizures](#)
- [Effects of antibiotic prophylaxis during labour on maternal and neonatal outcomes in women planning vaginal birth](#)
- [Midazolam for sedation of infants in the neonatal intensive care unit](#)
- [Non-invasive respiratory support in preterm infants as primary mode: a network meta-analysis](#)
- [Postextubation use of non-invasive respiratory support in preterm infants: a network meta-analysis](#)
- [Sustained versus standard inflations during neonatal resuscitation to prevent mortality and improve respiratory outcomes](#)

Neonatal services

[Data from the National Neonatal Audit Programme \(NNAP\) reveals a significant rise in the use of Deferred Cord Clamping \(DCC\) for preterm babies.](#) This life-saving practice, known to reduce mortality by around 32%, was performed on 68.3% of babies born before 34 weeks in 2023, up from 60.4% in 2022. The NNAP has been crucial in identifying neonatal units with lower-than-average DCC rates, helping to boost adoption across the UK. Since 2020, when rates were below 29%, DCC use has steadily increased and is expected to exceed 70% in 2024.

General

Isayama, T., et al. 2025. **Outcomes of Preterm Infants Born at 22 to 23 Weeks' Gestation in 11 International Neonatal Networks.** *JAMA pediatrics*. Available in full on request: lesley.firth@nhs.net



Karadavut, A.B., et al. 2025. **The criteria to classify body-proportionality of the small for gestational age newborn: a scoping review.** *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*, 25(1), pp.1-16. Available in full here: [BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth](#)

Kothapally, S., et al. 2025. **Early postnatal weight loss and its association with outcomes in very preterm neonates: a systematic review and meta-analysis.** *Neonatology*. Available in full here: [Neonatology](#)

van Hasselt, T.J., et al. 2025. **Neonatal Morbidities and Hospitalization in the First 2 Years of Life Among Infants Born Very Preterm.** *JAMA Network Open*, 8(9), pp.e2530123-e2530123. Available in full here: [JAMA Network Open](#)

Venkateswaran, S., et al. 2025. **Short-Term Outcomes of Early-Term Versus Full-Term and Late-Term Neonates: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.** *BJOG*. Available in full on request: lesley.firth@nhs.net

Pharmacology

An [NIHR-supported pilot project in Devon](#) has shown that babies with early-onset infections can safely complete their course of antibiotics at home, keeping families together and freeing up hospital capacity.

Cocchi, E., et al. 2025. **Dexmedetomidine as a Promising Neuroprotective Sedoanalgesic in Neonatal Therapeutic Hypothermia: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.** *Neonatology*. Available in full here: [Neonatology](#)

Fernandes Dias, M., et al. 2025. **Progesterone in pregnancy and neonatal outcomes: A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials.** *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*. Available in full on request: lesley.firth@nhs.net

Respiratory

Buvaneswarran, S., et al. 2025. **Active treatment vs expectant management of patent ductus arteriosus in preterm infants: a meta-analysis.** *JAMA pediatrics*. Available in full here: [JAMA Paediatrics](#)

Kitaoka, H., et al. 2025. **Inhaled Nitric Oxide for Bronchopulmonary Dysplasia-Associated Pulmonary Hypertension: A Systematic Review and Narrative Synthesis.** *Neonatology*. Available in full here: [Neonatology](#)

Feeding

Zhang, H., et al. 2025. **Enteral insulin for full enteral feeding in preterm infants: A systematic review and meta-analysis.** *Medicine*, 104(33), p.e44018. Available in full here: [Medicine](#)