



IMSOP FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AUTUMN QUARTERLY REPORT 2019

OUR ROLE AND PROGRESS TO DATE

What is the role of the Independent Maternity Services Oversight Panel (IMSOP)?

Following a joint review into maternity services at the former Cwm Taf Health Board by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the Royal College of Midwives, the Panel was established by the Minister for Health and Social Services to provide the necessary oversight to enable Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board to implement the review's recommendations. Our key responsibilities are detailed within our agreed terms of reference. Please click [here](#) for more information.

What work is the Panel doing in Cwm Taf Morgannwg to ensure maternity services are safe?

The Royal Colleges' review team identified eleven immediate quality and safety concerns (known as 'make-safes') which they escalated to Welsh Government and Cwm Taf University Health Board on 17 January 2019. As a matter of urgency, Welsh Government instructed the Health Board to make improvements to ensure the safety of maternity services.

The additional following steps have been taken to ensure that services can be safely provided:

1. The Panel has assessed the evidence provided by the Health Board in relation to the eleven 'make-safes' and the extent to which they have been addressed and embedded in operational practice. We will continue to monitor those changes over the coming months to be assured that they are part of everyday working.
2. Despite positive action taken in all of the areas, three 'make-safes' remain a work in progress. These relate to issues around culture, behaviours and staffing. The Health Board is monitoring these closely to ensure they do not pose any immediate safety risks.
3. In addition to this, Welsh Government hold regular weekly monitoring meetings where they scrutinise the Health Board's performance in all key areas. This information is shared with the Panel.

What progress has been made?

The Health Board has developed a Maternity Services Improvement Plan to ensure all the review recommendations are met. Early progress has been made in delivering against the



clinical top priorities of the recommendations. The appointment of some key new leadership posts within maternity and within the organisation overall appears to have made a notable impact.

The pace of progress has been hindered due to some gaps in staff and the necessary skills within the Maternity Services Improvement Programme. Steps have been taken by the Health Board to overcome this and the appointment of the Maternity Improvement Director has been a significant development. The Programme now has three Project Boards who hold responsibility for different areas of the Plan.

THE CLINICAL REVIEWS

What is the clinical review strategy?

This is a document that sets out the process and approach to undertaking the clinical reviews and look back exercise and is available via our web page [here](#).

How many cases are being reviewed? Why have the number of cases being considered increased?

We want to ensure that we maximise the opportunities for learning – this includes learning from where care has been good as well as those cases where the care was not of a standard we should expect. We have therefore adopted a 'blank page' approach in deciding which cases should be looked at.

The criteria selected by the Panel are significantly broader than those used by the Health Board to identify the 43 cases which were considered by the RCOG review team.

The reviews will focus on the experience of care as well as clinical safety issues.

Due to this marked increase in the scope and breadth of the independent clinical review process and from the work completed by the Panel's clinicians to date, it is anticipated that around 150 cases will be reviewed as part of the first phase of reviews (the 2016-2018 look-back).

Why are the clinical review figures approximated?

There are two main reasons for that. Firstly, the data is still being quality assured by the Health Board, some of which needs to be checked with data involving national reporting systems. Secondly, the clinical review process has been designed as an evolving process to ensure that every case that may need review is identified and nothing slips through the net. This means that any additional cases that require clinical review can be incorporated as the learning progresses.



Does that mean that more cases of serious harm have been identified?

The additional cases are not all serious incidents and it is anticipated that areas of good practice will be identified as well as opportunities for improvement. The review programme will focus on learning.

Will all self-referrals be clinically reviewed?

A commitment has been given that all cases will be looked at if an individual has raised concerns. A process has been agreed with the Health Board to determine how self-referrals are considered in those cases which do not fall within the clinical review criteria agreed by the Panel. It is important to note that some cases may require a review but not necessarily a clinical one, however the agreed way forward in each case will be agreed by the Panel and we will monitor their management going forward.

How will I know if my case is being clinically reviewed?

You will be contacted to let you know that your case is one of those included within the 2016-2018 look-back. We hope to begin doing this from November onwards. From here you will be able to decide whether you wish to remain engaged in the process moving forward and, if so, in what way. We will explain the process and what this means for you, as well as how any feedback will be provided.

What are the timescales for the reviews?

We are planning for the first phase of the clinical review programme to be commenced by the end of November 2019.

This will remain an evolving process and consequently it would be inappropriate for us to estimate timescales. We are sorry we cannot provide you with further information at this time. It is vital this work is completed thoroughly and so depends on availability of external independent reviewers. We can assure you it is being taken forward as quickly as possible.

Will I receive compensation?

All cases will be reviewed in accordance with the Putting Things Right arrangements including the provision of Redress where this is appropriate.

The Panel's role is to ensure that any serious incidents which have occurred are properly investigated and that appropriate improvements have taken place. We will advise the Health Board where cases should be considered for Redress.

Is the Panel's approach to clinical reviews disproportionate?

No. The inclusion criteria are comparable to other reviews undertaken in the UK, and are those which the Panel's clinicians believe will enable lessons to be learned and services to be improved for women and families.



What if the clinical reviews discover that matters need to be referred to external bodies?

We are aware that there may be some cases that the clinical reviewers find which should be reported to other professional or regulatory bodies for further investigation, and we need to be prepared for those circumstances. The Panel's clinicians have met with the regulatory bodies and have agreed ways of collaborative working. This is detailed in the Clinical Review Strategy.

ENGAGING WITH THE PANEL AND HEALTH BOARD

How can I get in touch with the Independent Maternity Services Oversight Panel?

Should you wish to get in touch with the Panel, you can email our mailbox oversightpanel.maternity@gov.wales.

When will we receive an update from the Panel?

In addition to the formal reporting arrangements, the Panel will be publishing regular newsletters and updates. For those of you who have already requested to be involved in our work going forward, you should receive the newsletter and updates automatically. If you would like to receive communication on a regular basis, please let us know by contacting our mailbox.

What is the best way to get in touch with the Health Board?

Following publication of the Quarterly Report, the Health Board have opened a helpline to ensure queries are dealt with openly and efficiently.

Please contact the helpline on **08000 328999**. The helpline will initially be active for 4 days from Tuesday 8th October to Friday 11th October between office hours of **0900 to 1700**.

Alternatively you can email any queries to CTM_MaternityImprovementProgramme@nhs.wales.uk. This email address will remain open for the foreseeable future.

How can I get involved in the Health Board's community events?

Should you wish to participate in the forthcoming maternity services co-production events, please contact the Health Board directly via CTM_Maternityevents@wales.nhs.uk.

The dates for these events are as follows:-

- Merthyr – Friday 8 November 2019;
- Llantrisant – Thursday 28 November 2019;
- Bridgend – Tuesday 25 February 2020.



These events are being supported by Cath Broderick, The Panel's Lay Member, and are intended to demonstrate that the Health Board is an open, transparent organisation which genuinely wants to engage and involve women and families in the design and delivery of its services.

Are there other ways to get involved?

We want to make sure that you can continue to have your voices heard in different ways. The community engagement events will include many approaches to share your experiences in an informal setting.

Also, the My Maternity, My Way forum (formerly the Maternity Services Liaison Committee) is a group of parents working in partnership with midwives, doctors, and other people with an interest in maternity services in Cwm Taf Morgannwg. Their aim is to help improve and shape future maternity care to women, partners and babies. If you want to share your experience and be part of the group contact

CTM_MaternityImprovementProgramme@nhs.wales.uk.

What additional support services are available?

- The Sands telephone helpline is free to call from landlines and mobiles on **0808 164 3332**. The team is available to speak to you from 9.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday and 6pm to 10pm Tuesday and Thursday evenings. There is also a mailbox (helpline@sands.org.uk) and a Bereavement Support app downloadable from their webpage.
- The Community Health Council (CHC) is able to provide independent advice. The local CHC office in Cwm Taf Morgannwg is contactable via email (enquiries.cwmtafchc@waleschc.org.uk) or via telephone on **01443 405 830** during office hours.
- The Snowdrop Support Group is a group of parents and families who have experienced the loss of their baby and get together with the support of the Health Board's Bereavement Midwife, to share experiences. You can get involved in this group by emailing CTM_MaternityImprovementProgramme@nhs.wales.uk or you can join the *Cwm Taf Morgannwg Snowdrop Support Group* Facebook page.

I am currently pregnant, who can I discuss my concerns with?

We would advise you to initially speak to your community midwife so that you can share your concerns and look at options for your pregnancy care.

We hope that the Health Board will be able to provide you with the right support. However, if your concerns remain, the Minister has ensured that alternative arrangements can be made should you feel that you do not wish to use the services in Cwm Taf Morgannwg.



A woman has a right to choose where to give birth. If you decide you do want to change your place of birth the Health Board will work with you to ensure that you can have your baby wherever you choose.

Everyone in Wales has an equal right to high quality maternity care.

I'm pregnant and am due to give birth in Cwm Taf Morgannwg. Is it safe?

The safety of patients is the utmost priority and the Health Board has dedicated and committed staff who take their responsibilities to provide high quality care extremely seriously. They have been taking action at all levels over recent months to make sure services are safe and of a high standard.

We understand that the report's findings will cause anxiety for many families. You can contact your community midwife (if you haven't already) but if you would like to discuss any concerns and questions in more detail you can contact the helpline on **08000 328999** between the hours of 0900-1700 from Tuesday 8th October to Friday 11th October. If appropriate and possible, they can facilitate a meeting with senior member of maternity team.

You can also email the dedicated email address at CTM_MaternityImprovementProgramme@wales.nhs.uk at any time and they will arrange for someone to contact you directly.

I received care in Cwm Taf and wasn't happy. What can I do?

If anyone has any concerns about the care they have received they can contact the Maternity Improvement helpline or mailbox, as detailed above. They will make sure all concerns are properly investigated. Cwm Taf Morgannwg CHC, the independent patients' watchdog, can also be contacted for support and advice.

I have made a complaint previously and haven't had a response. When can I expect to hear anything from the Health Board?

We understand that the Health Board is experiencing some delay in responding to a current increase in complaints. We have been advised that you should have received a letter to inform you of the delay and to provide expected timescales.

If you have not received any information from the Health Board please contact the concerns team via email CTHB_Concerns@wales.nhs.uk so they can update you on progress.

What other reviews are taking place?

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales has commenced a National Review of Maternity Services. As part of the review, they will be inspecting maternity services, including labour wards, in each health board in Wales. These will take place from summer 2019 to early 2020. The inspections will check that women and their families are receiving safe and effective care. After each inspection, they will write a report which will be published on HIW's website within three months. They will raise any urgent concerns immediately with the health boards



and Welsh Government. At the end of the review, they will publish an all-Wales report. This will highlight what services are doing well and what they need to improve across Wales.

They are currently creating a page on their website which will be dedicated to the maternity review. This will include updates on their work and inspections.

Where can I access the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales' national survey of maternity services?

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales' national survey of maternity services can be accessed [here](#). We would encourage you to get involved to ensure the voices of women and their families shape the provision of maternity care in Wales.

If you have any suggestions for additional questions please do let us know via our mailbox.