

Standardised investigation and shared learning into maternal deaths

The London Maternity Clinical Network developed a standardised system for the review of severe maternal morbidity and maternal deaths. This process helps to ensure objective investigation, consistency and London-wide learning from these tragic events, with the overarching aim of reducing, where possible, severe harm to women and ultimately reducing London's maternal death rate.

OBJECTIVES

The London Maternal Morbidity and Mortality working group:

- Introduced a new reporting framework for all maternal deaths which has been adopted by all trusts providing maternity services
- Undertaken in-depth analyses of 26 maternal deaths (calendar year 2015)
- Supported London maternal death serious incident panels with relevant and appropriate external expertise.
- Developed a thematic review of London cases which uncovered key themes documented in a 2016 report.

RESULTS

Nine recommendations

- Standardisation of MEOWS policy and charts
- Identification of named clinical lead for coordination of care in complex cases
- London-wide policy for reaching out to women who do not attend or “fall through the net”
- Communication using digital channels
- Implementation of Continuity of care/carer best practice guidance
- Closer collaboration with London Ambulance Service
- Implementation of sepsis protocol
- Guidelines for identifying pulmonary embolus in women at risk
- Creating understandable information for all populations

CONCLUSION

- First multi-disciplinary, inter-hospital collaboration to standardise the maternal death review process in England.
- Enhances multidisciplinary working with a holistic view of system, with clinical experts from all disciplines working beyond organisational and professional boundaries.
- Increases cost and process efficiencies through an established, consistent approach.
- Dissemination of London-wide themes and shared learning can improve outcomes for women and babies.
- Viewed as an exemplar, with the ability to be used across other areas of care.
- Shared learnings will create a safer pathway of care for women and babies in future.