

Mind the Gap 2021 explores training offered to the UK maternity frontline workforce in 2020/21, with a particular focus on the COVID-19 pandemic. Though training is a central recommendation for improving safety in maternity services, gaps in training which already existed – due to chronic underfunding and staff shortages – worsened during the period surveyed.

Urgent action is needed to support units to undertake all the training that staff require, to make every birth safer and better.



LESS TRAINING WAS PROVIDED

The amount of training decreased during 2020/21.



TRAINING WAS LESS INTERACTIVE

The instances of using pre-recorded lectures and videos doubled from 2017/18.



BARRIERS TO TRAINING INCREASED FROM 2017/18

The most frequently identified barrier to training was the pandemic, and all others related to lack of resource to deliver or attend training.



MONEY SPENT ON TRAINING NEARLY HALVED SINCE 2017/18

The average spend was around £34,000. Spend varied massively across organisations from over £350,000 to £0.

"The maternity training team have had to think outside the box to deliver the highest standard of training in the most difficult of circumstances."

A SPOTLIGHT ON GAPS IN TRAINING THAT WOULD SAVE LIVES



WE HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO TO ACHIEVE EQUITY AND EQUALITY

NHS England has recently devised prevention strategies and guidance to achieve equity and equality in maternity care. Only one maternity service provided their frontline professionals with all of the training we looked at which related to these strategies.

In the latest mortality report



EPILEPSY & STROKE were the second leading cause of death in mothers.



HEART DISEASE was the leading cause of death in mothers.

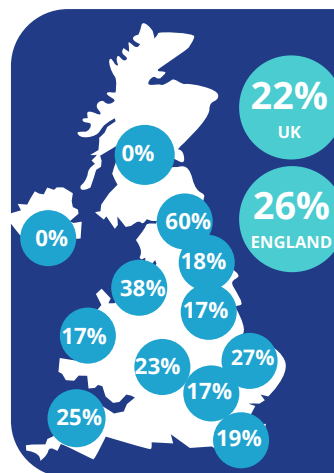
In Mind the Gap 2021



< 1 IN 10 ORGANISATIONS provided training in how to manage epilepsy & strokes (9%).



< A THIRD OF ORGANISATIONS provided training in how to manage heart disease (29%).



SAVING BABIES' LIVES

Training guidance in the Saving Babies' Lives Care Bundle - devised to reduce stillbirths and neonatal deaths - was **provided fully by fewer than a quarter of organisations** in the UK, and this varied widely between regions.

This is an increase from 8% in 2017/18.

BARRIERS MOSTLY RELATED TO LACK OF RESOURCE

Almost all organisations identified barriers to attending and providing training (97%)



THE PANDEMIC
9 in 10



VENUE AVAILABILITY & RESTRICTIONS
8 in 10



STAFF SHORTAGES
7 in 10



EQUIPMENT



MONEY



TRAINER AVAILABILITY

The pandemic was most frequently identified as a barrier to training. All other barriers related to lack of resource, and were the same as 2017/18.