

National Midwifery Council's response to the Ockenden Report.

You may have seen that the first report from the independent review into maternity services at the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust was released this month.

The review was launched following concerns from families over the deaths of mothers and babies, and those who had experienced harm while receiving maternity care at the trust.

In response to this moving report, Andrea Sutcliffe, our Chief Executive and Registrar, said:

"The personal experiences that shape this report are simply heart-breaking. My thoughts are with all of the women and their families who have suffered and whose lives have been devastated; not only by what happened to them and their babies but also by how they were then treated.

"Many of the themes in today's report are painful echoes of other reviews. It should not need the determined campaigning of grieving families to bring these concerns to light so meaningful action can happen. I'm grateful to Donna Ockenden and her team for listening to the families, thoroughly reviewing their concerns and outlining practical recommendations to make a real difference.

"The Nursing and Midwifery Council has a role to play as the professional regulator for midwives. The new Future Midwife standards we launched this year provide a firm foundation for the excellent care women and their babies need.

"These standards emphasise the importance of midwives using the best evidence to support women in making informed decisions about their care. They highlight the critical role midwives have when caring for women and families where complications arise. And critically, our standards make it crystal clear that professional relationships within multidisciplinary teams working well together are vital to ensure the needs and concerns of women are listened to, respected and acted on.

"There are so many dedicated professionals in maternity services who want to provide the safest and best possible care and support. We all need to work together to make sure that happens for every woman, every baby and every family all of the time. All of us in healthcare taking this report seriously and implementing its recommendations will help to make that a reality. Doing nothing is not an option."

We expect a final report with recommendations will be published later next year.