Westminster Health Forum policy conference:
Next steps for maternity and neonatal care in England
Timing: Morning, Friday, 4th December 2026
*****Taking place online*****

Draft agenda subject to change

8.30 Registration

9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian

9.05 **Building a safer and more inclusive maternity and neonatal system - insights from the *National Maternity and Neonatal Investigation***
Professor Alexander Heazell, Professor, Obstetrics and Director, Tommy's Stillbirth Research Centre, University of Manchester; and Expert Advisor, National Maternity and Neonatal Investigation
Senior commentator
Questions and comments from the floor

9.40 **Listening to women and families - the role of lived experience in shaping safer and more equitable care**
Chloe Oliver, CEO, The MASIC Foundation

9.50 **Embedding learning and reducing inequalities - priorities for improving maternity care and outcomes**
embedding recommendations from national investigations into local improvement programmes | progress and next steps for the NHS England Maternity and Neonatal 10 Point Plan and national action plan | assurance, board oversight and identifying where further support or action is needed | learning from incidents, complaints and investigations | improving triage, risk assessment and escalation | implementation of Martha's Rule | addressing inequalities in maternal and neonatal outcomes, including disparities affecting Black and Asian women, disabled women and underserved communities | improving culturally competent, personalised and trauma-informed care | informed choice and communication of clinical risk | strengthening perinatal mental health support and engagement with women and families
Hazel Williams, CEO, Birthrights
Senior representative, commissioning
Senior representative, research
Senior representative, innovation

10.15 Questions and comments from the floor

10.40 **Using investigation insights, safety data and emerging technology to identify risk and improve maternity care**
Sandy Lewis, Director, Maternity and Newborn Safety Investigations
Questions and comments from the floor

11.05 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian

11.10 Break

11.20 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian

11.25 **Addressing workforce pressures in maternity and neonatal care - priorities for recruitment, retention and professional development**
Senior speaker confirmed from the **Royal College of Midwives**

11.35 **Delivering sustainable maternity services - workforce, infrastructure and reform priorities**
priorities for the upcoming 10 Year Workforce Plan | strengthening leadership, culture and psychological safety | recruitment, retention, professional development and routes into permanent posts for newly qualified staff | responding to staffing pressures, workload and increasing clinical complexity | developing sustainable community and neighbourhood maternity care, including continuity across different birth settings | integration between maternity, neonatal, primary, community and perinatal mental health services | improving digital records and information-sharing to support continuity and safety | condition and suitability of maternity and neonatal facilities | priorities for estates investment | use of the Maternity Outcomes Signal System and other data to identify variation and emerging concerns
Kelly Drewry, Programme Lead, Workforce Wellbeing, NHS Charities Together
Gareth Banks, Director, AHR Architects
Senior representative, NHS
Senior representative, community midwifery
Senior representative, training

12.05 Questions and comments from the floor

12.30 **Next steps for maternity and neonatal quality, regulation and accountability - oversight and priorities for sustaining improvement**
Senior representative, regulation
Questions and comments from the floor

12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Health Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
Tess Mitchell-Thomas, Westminster Health Forum