

# Southwark Maternity Commission Health and Wellbeing Board

14 November 2024



## Request that the Health and Wellbeing Board:

- Note the findings of the Southwark Maternity Commission report and its recommendations;
- Agree to take on the oversight of this work;
- Receive the following updates and reviews:
  - Annual update on progress
  - Three-year interim review in Sep 2027
  - Five-year evaluation in Sep 2029

# The Maternity Commission journey

There has been a huge amount of work taken place over the past nine months, including six public meetings, community engagement and stakeholder workshops.



# What we hoped to achieve

The aim was for the Commission's resulting evidence to lead to three key outputs:

1. **A report and recommendations** which will be used to support **action planning** and change in the systems needed to reduce drivers of inequality
2. **Awareness resources** which will aim to raise community awareness about having a safe pregnancy and childbirth, including advice as to how to self-advocate during pregnancy
3. **A message of solidarity** to the population of Southwark to reassure residents that their voices are being heard

# Key themes

## Our work with stakeholders led to the development of five themes



Tackling discrimination and better supporting women with specific needs.



Making sure women are listened to and supported to speak up, whatever their language or background.



Providing women with the right information at the right time in the right way.



Joining up council and NHS services better around women's needs, and making sure care is consistent across borough borders.



Supporting the workforce to remain in their roles and be able to give compassionate and kind care for all mothers.



# The Commission Recommendations

1

## **Leadership in addressing racism that leads to unequal maternal health**

**Introduce clear, evidence-based policies that address racism and inequalities in maternity care and the wider healthcare system. Include review and improvement in existing frameworks and systems, such as the NHS Workforce Race Equality Standard and ending charging migrants for maternity services.**

**Lead agents of change**  
Central government, LMNS,  
GSTT, KCH, SLaM

# The Commission Recommendations

2

## Develop a new national way of reporting maternal health

Work with local authorities to introduce a way to record and respond to perinatal health data. Make sure all maternal health data is collected and reported in a standard way across all healthcare settings and focuses on ethnicity to highlight and address if people are getting unfair and different treatment.

**Lead agents of change**  
Central government

# The Commission Recommendations

3

## Review the maternity workforce

Review the wider maternity healthcare system's capacity to support its workforce, with a focus on improving pay, conditions, and resilience. Provide healthcare professionals with training, resources, and a supportive work environment to improve compassion in care, particularly for Black and Asian mothers.

**Lead agents of change**  
Central government, LMNS,  
GSTT, KCH, SLaM



# The Commission Recommendations

4

## Evaluate the fairness of maternity services

Review current services for Southwark residents with the highest levels of need. Develop and improve new and existing services to make sure they work for people with complex, overlapping needs.

**Lead agents of change**  
LMNS, GSTT, KCH, SLaM,  
GPs, Southwark Council,  
VCFSE organisations

# The Commission Recommendations

5

## Listen to and empower families

Create an inclusive environment where all family members are heard and have the information to make sure their needs are met. Improve communication by creating and promoting accessible resources so that families are fully informed and can navigate the healthcare system.

**Lead agents of change**  
LMNS, GSTT, KCH, SLaM,  
Southwark Council, VCFSE  
organisations

# The Commission Recommendations

6

## Preparation and support before pregnancy

Southwark partners (Local Maternity and Neonatal System, local authorities, voluntary and community sector and maternity care providers) raise awareness together of the importance of getting ready for pregnancy. Use all services and contacts so that women arrive at maternity services in the best possible health (in particular those at risk of poorer maternal health outcomes).

**Lead agents of change**  
LMNS, GSTT, KCH, SLaM,  
GPs, Southwark Council,  
VCFSE organisations

# The Commission Recommendations

7

## **Give parents the right information, at the right time, in the right way**

**Southwark partners (Local Maternity and Neonatal System, local authority, voluntary and community sector and maternity care providers) work together on their communications across each stage of the perinatal period. Make sure women and their partners get the right, inclusive and culturally appropriate information**

**Lead agents of change**  
LMNS, GSTT, KCH, SLaM,  
GPs, Southwark Council,  
VCFSE organisations

# The Commission Recommendations

8

## **Create a joined-up approach to families' needs between the NHS, south east London boroughs, and voluntary and community sector**

**Strengthen partnerships by creating a network for staff delivering care to Southwark residents. Share learning, facilitate integration across services and improve knowledge and resource sharing. Look for opportunities for co-commissioning with neighbouring boroughs to enhance and provide consistent services across borough borders.**

**Lead agents of change**  
LMNS, GSTT, KCH, SLaM,  
GPs, Southwark Council,  
VCFSE organisations

# The Commission Recommendations

9

## **Southwark Council to review their role in maternity Care**

**Look at their role in assurance and scrutiny of the maternity care system and empower system leaders to hold people to account. Together with local trusts review, identify and close gaps in maternity services. Consider their role in housing and cost of living services, and in collaborating with local voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector organisations.**

**Lead agents of change**  
Southwark Council

# The Commission Recommendations

10

## **Review how feedback is dealt with**

**Work with NHS trusts to review how they identify, share and respond to patient and staff complaints, particularly ones about racial discrimination. Embedding a culture where staff are encouraged and supported to speak up. Make sure that the context of reviews is appropriate and develop an integrated, borough-wide response to review findings.**

**Lead agents of change**  
LMNS, GSTT, KCH, SLaM,  
GPs, Southwark Council,  
VCFSE organisations

# Signs of success

As a result of the Commission's ten recommendations, we have the ambition for improvements around five key outcomes within the next five years:

**Outcome 1:** Reduced infant mortality

**Outcome 2:** Reduced maternal morbidity

**Outcome 3:** Increased positive experience of maternity care

**Outcome 4:** Increased staff satisfaction

**Outcome 5:** Closing the health inequality gaps





# Next steps – the Commission

## Timeline of next steps for the **Maternity Commission recommendations**



**September 2024**

Organisations commit to change

**October 2024 – April 2025**

Development of the action plan

**April 2025 – September 2027**

Implementation of action plan

**September 2027**

Three-year interim review

**September 2029**

Five-year review

- A strategic steering group consisting of key stakeholders will be formed.
- The strategic steering group will oversee and support sub-groups for recommendation areas.
- Resident involvement will continue to be prioritised at every level.

# Next steps – the Commission

## Phase 1

- Assess inequalities locally
- Engage stakeholders
- Publish findings and key recommendations

<b>Period</b>	Jan- Sept 2024
<b>Status</b>	Complete

## Phase 2

- Establish governance
- Establish actions
- Identify synergies with other work areas
- Develop evaluation framework
- Embed “quick win” actions

<b>Period</b>	Sept 2024- Apr 2025
<b>Status</b>	Ongoing

## Phase 3

- Embed actions
- Monitoring and oversight
- Annual reporting

<b>Period</b>	Apr 2025- Sept 2027
<b>Status</b>	Not started

## Phase 4

- Evaluation of actions and impact on outcomes
- Three-year and five-year reports

<b>Period</b>	Sept 2027- Sept 2029
<b>Status</b>	Not started

# In the media

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## Maternity report calls for clear policies and 'urgent action' to tackle racism

A report by the Southwark Maternity Commission spoke to 750 women, families and healthcare professionals and urges the government to introduce leadership roles and review existing frameworks to tackle racism.



Shamaan Freeman-Powell  
News correspondent @Shamaan\_SkyNews

Monday 30 September 2024 14:52, UK



The Southwark Maternity Commission took place today lead by Cllr Evelyn Akoto

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### EXCLUSIVE: Major inequalities in maternity care for Black, Asian and minority ethnic women

The Mirror went to Southwark Council to report on its commission that set out to fix maternity inequality when it comes to Black and Asian mothers

By **Serena Richards**, Journalist  
19:16, 30 Sep 2024

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Southwark Council has unveiled a plan to improve maternity care for Black, Asian and minority ethnic women. It came after a nine-month investigation that highlighted inequalities in maternity care and experience.

The report, which came out today, shed light on concerns regarding the quality of care, communication, and cultural sensitivity across local maternity services.

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### Council sets out plan to tackle stark inequalities in maternity care

30 September 2024 Claudia Lee

Southwark council has unveiled a plan to improve **maternity outcomes for black**, Asian and minority ethnic women after a nine-month investigation revealed stark inequalities in maternity care in the borough.

In January, Southwark council established a maternity commission after a national report published last year revealed that women from black ethnic groups were four times more likely to die in pregnancy than those from white groups, and women from Asian ethnic backgrounds almost twice as likely.

The **Southwark Maternity Commission**, co-chaired by councillor Evelyn Akoto, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and professor Dame Donna Kinnair, published its final report today.



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- More than a third of women did not take up breast screening offer last year
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- Safe access zones around abortion services come into effect

mirror.co.uk

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## South London borough fighting to stop refugees being charged £14k to give birth in England

Pregnant women fear being chased by debt collectors so many are avoiding seeking help, making them more likely to die in childbirth

By **Robert Firth** Local Democracy Reporter  
WIRE, 1 OCT 2024

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# Next steps – Southwark Health and Wellbeing Board

## **Request that the Health and Wellbeing Board group considers:**

- Note the findings of the Southwark Maternity Commission report and its recommendations;
- Agree to take on the oversight of this work;
- Receive the following updates and reviews:
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## Questions for the board

- What are your observations and reflections on this work?
- Which partner(s) is best placed to take the lead on oversight on behalf of the HWBB?
- Is the HWBB content with the reporting schedule?
- How best can the HWBB work alongside OSC to optimise delivery of the Commission recommendations?

Thank you

