

Healthcare equity

Introduction to healthcare equity



We are concerned about the inherent inequalities in maternity care for some people with protected characteristics. Failings in this area results in harm to women and babies.

Data shows that compared to women from White ethnic groups, Black and Asian women are significantly more likely to die during, or up to 6 weeks after, pregnancy.

The impact of existing inequalities should be considered in all aspects of delivery of care.

Our findings revealed some trusts were taking steps to address inequalities. However, there is more to be done to ensure care can meet people's needs.

We found some good examples of providers understanding their local population and tailoring care accordingly. For example, through enhanced translation services.

We also saw some examples where healthcare inequalities were not being addressed. Ethnicity data was not routinely captured and analysed when services investigated safety incidents. Some staff raised concerns of discrimination due to their race and ethnicity.

Services that do not address healthcare inequalities are at risk of institutional discrimination and will fail to address the increased risk of significant harm for some women and their babies.

Listen to the [Health equity in NHS maternity services](#) podcast.