



**Department
of Health &
Social Care**

*From Maria Caulfield MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department of Health & Social Care*

*39 Victoria Street
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Steve Brine MP
Health and Social Care Select Committee

29 March 2023

Dear Steve Brine MP,

I am writing to the Committee to provide an update on the future of the HSIB's maternity investigation programme, in light of the recommendations made by the Committee as part of its inquiry into the Safety of Maternity Services in England. The Committee's report welcomed the independent nature of HSIB investigations but noted that it was important that the investigations programme continue to pursue improvements in this area.

As you will be aware on 26 January 2022, by way of a Written Ministerial Statement, the Department of Health and Social Care announced that a separate Special Health Authority would be established to continue the independent Maternity Investigation Programme, which currently sits in the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch.

Following careful consideration, the Department has determined that the most appropriate and streamlined mechanism for delivering the valued and independent maternity investigations is for the function to sit within and be hosted by the Care Quality Commission. The Department remains committed to ensuring the continuation of the independent maternity investigations programme and values its engagement with trusts and families and its role in improving maternity safety.

Tomorrow we will publish a Written Ministerial Statement, the purpose of the maternity investigation programme will remain the same as set out last January: to provide independent, standardised and family focused investigations of maternity cases for families; to provide learning to the health system via reports at local, regional and national level; analyse data to identify key trends and provide system wide learning; be a system expert in standards for maternity investigations; and collaborate with system partners to escalate safety concerns.

Yours sincerely,

MARIA CAULFIELD