

## **Supplementary written evidence submitted by the Department of Health and Social Care (PSN0029)**

### **Timescale for the next steps following the consideration of the findings of the consultation on coronial investigations of stillbirths.**

- In December 2023, we published the factual summary of responses to the consultation regarding proposals to introduce coronial investigations of stillbirths.
- We are working closely with the Ministry of Justice to give full consideration to next steps in this area and how government will respond.
- A further statement will be issued in due course, which sets out whether, and if so how, the government intends to take action.

### **Information about the national maternity oversight group chaired by Minister Caulfield, and its meeting on 20 February 2024.**

The Maternity and Neonatal National Oversight Group is chaired by Maria Caulfield MP, Minister for Mental Health and Women's Health Strategy. This group brings together key experts and leaders from across the sector to drive forward improvement in maternity and neonatal services where national leadership is required, and oversee the implementation of national level recommendations from the Ockenden and Kirkup Reports and other maternity reviews.

The group has met three times since September 2023. Each meeting focuses in depth on key areas within maternity and neonatal care; previous meetings have included 'deep dives' into data, workforce and estates. The third meeting of the Maternity and Neonatal National Oversight Group took place on 20 February 2024. Secretary of State was in attendance for part of the meeting, in addition to Minister Caulfield.

Minutes for the meeting are shared with attendees after each meeting. They are not published. Going forward, it is our intention to share a summary of the discussion at each meeting more widely.

Topics discussed at the meeting on 20 February included:

- An update from the Care Quality Commission on the key findings from their recent investigations around the maternity and neonatal estate and equipment.
- The maternity workforce including current position, future plans and any challenges.
- Some of the leading factors in maternal deaths (during pregnancy and up to 42 days after birth) and what further action can be taken to reduce maternal mortality, taking a joined-up approach which includes public health and mental health as well as maternity care.

**Further information about how the induction programme is rolled out in social care and how it will be implemented and funded. This includes the funding for backfilling staff undertaking the induction training during work hours.**

Since publication in June 2022, the Department has continued to work closely with colleagues in NHS England to support implementation of the Messenger recommendations agreed as first priorities (1a, 1b and 2), including commissioning Skills for Care, the national sector delivery partner, to develop a national induction programme for adult social care, which is in line with induction for healthcare workers. A detailed communications and engagement plan was finalised in spring 2023, which has informed on-going work over the last year to raise awareness of the new arrangements with social care employers and stakeholder groups, in preparation for launch of induction for new entrants in April 2024. Skills for Care have a [dedicated webpage](#) setting out plans for induction and leadership support in 2024 in response to the Messenger recommendations.

In terms of how we are defining 'entry level', this relates to any person entering social care in any role/setting and at any level. The induction checklist will cover all social care roles, including registered and unregistered staff, registered managers, as well as entrants joining through our international recruitment route. In January 2024, we published a Care Workforce Pathway, a new career structure for the adult social care workforce, setting out the knowledge, skills, values and behaviours needed to work in adult social care, as well as the learning and development opportunities which will enable people to develop and progress. The 'new to care' role category in the Pathway aligns with the National Induction in Messenger, where new social care and support workers will be encouraged to complete a new Level 2 Care Certificate apprenticeship in their first year.

We have agreed further funding with Skills for Care to continue their sector engagement activity to promote the national induction activity during 2024/25. This will include a national webinar, presentations, social media messaging and briefings, incorporating frequently asked questions and other local intelligence and insights, to inform best practice and encourage collaboration across local systems. We will agree Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to support the monitoring and evaluation of that activity and any read across to the Care Workforce Pathway, for example staff progressing into more senior leadership/management roles, who may require additional support and development.

We are still considering how best to assess what impact the new induction arrangements have had in social care, including any resulting improvements to recruitment and retention and how engaged social care employers are in maintaining a shared approach with health and how effective this is proving.

In addition to the induction activity, we have also agreed to review the existing Managers' Framework for social care, with a view to supporting greater consistency in management standards across health and care settings. We are also co-developing with Skills for Care and the sector, the next phase of the Care Workforce Pathway which includes deputy and registered manager roles, which will enable relevant information from the refresh of the Managers' Framework to be incorporated into the Pathway as we move to implementation from mid-2024.

**Feb 2024**