



Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare

Statement on the release of the National Maternity Review's *Better Births: Improving outcomes of maternity services in England*

The FSRH welcomes the publication of the National Maternity Review's *Better Births*. We believe the report's focus on personalisation, safety and continuity highlights several of the key elements needed to ensure that every woman receives high quality maternity care.

However, this report fails to comprehensively address the important issue of post-partum contraception. Whilst we are pleased to see the report recommend that GPs should include an assessment of a woman's contraceptive needs at the 6 week postnatal appointment, this appointment is often too late to discuss contraception with new mothers. Current national guidance recommends that for women who have resumed sexual activity contraception is required from the 21st day after delivery and that provision of information in the antenatal period should be routine.

We believe that the omission of a detailed recommendation regarding post-pregnancy contraception represents a missed opportunity. We are particularly concerned that the National Maternity Review's recommendations do not align with the current national clinical guidance nor with the Chief Medical Officer's recommendations regarding post-partum contraception.

Dr Chris Wilkinson, FSRH President said:

'As the Chief Medical Officer has recently acknowledged, increased access to post-partum contraception and discussion of family planning prior to delivery would provide women with more choice in how they plan healthy pregnancies. It is a great shame that the National Maternity Review's report fails to recognise this key benefit for women.'

Ends

24.2.2016

Notes to editors:

- The Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare (FSRH) is the largest professional membership body working in sexual and reproductive health in the UK. It supports healthcare professionals to deliver high quality care. Its vision is of a world where quality SRH is accessible to all. It grants diplomas, certificates, fellowships and equivalent recognition of specialist knowledge and skills in family planning and reproductive health care. It has over 15,500 members - doctors and nurses of whom over 10,000 are general practitioners. It promotes conferences and lectures, provides

members with an advisory service and publishes *The Journal of Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care*. For more information please visit www.fsrh.org

- National Maternity Review (2016) *Better Births: Improving outcomes of maternity services in England* Available at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/national-maternity-review-report.pdf>
- Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer (2015) *The Health of the 51%: Women* Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/484383/cmo-report-2014.pdf

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