

PRESS STATEMENT

24 June 2026

Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire responds to the Independent Review of Maternity Services at Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (HWNN) welcomes the publication of the Independent Review of Maternity Services at Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust.

Today is first and foremost about the families whose courage, persistence and determination made this Review possible. For years, mothers, fathers and families spoke out about the care they received, often while carrying the burden of profound grief, trauma and loss. We pay tribute to every family who shared their experiences and helped bring about this moment.

The findings of the Review are deeply troubling. They describe circumstances in which women and families were too often not listened to, concerns were not acted upon, and opportunities to prevent harm were missed. The experiences documented in the Review demand reflection, accountability and sustained action from everyone involved in the planning, delivery and oversight of maternity services.

At its heart, this Review is a reminder that listening is not a soft or optional part of healthcare. Listening to women, believing women, responding to concerns, and involving families in decisions are fundamental components of safe and compassionate care.

As organisations across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire begin the work of responding to the Review's recommendations, the voices of women and families must remain at the centre of that work. Their experiences should not simply inform improvement plans; they should help shape, challenge and evaluate them.

We also welcome the efforts made throughout the Review to hear from communities whose voices are too often overlooked. The NHS must build on that approach by ensuring that women from Black, Asian and other minority ethnic communities, disabled women, women facing poverty, women with limited English proficiency, and others who experience barriers to care are not only engaged during periods of review but are consistently heard and involved in the design and delivery of services.

Sabrina Taylor, CEO, said:

“Behind every finding in this Review is a woman, a baby and a family whose experience matters. We owe a huge debt to the families who continued to speak out, often over many years, in pursuit of answers and change.”

The findings are difficult to read and will be deeply upsetting for many people across our communities. What matters now is that organisations respond with honesty, humility and determination. Families must be able to see not only that lessons have been identified, but that meaningful change is happening.

Women and families should never have to fight to be heard. Safe care depends on listening, and the voices of those most affected by these failures must remain central to every stage of improvement.”

Our call to action

HWNN calls on Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, NHS England and partners across the local health and care system to:

- Implement the Review's recommendations in full and at pace.
- Involve women and families meaningfully in improvement work, investigations and decision-making.
- Demonstrate clear and measurable progress through transparent public reporting.
- Ensure that equality, accessibility and culturally safe care are embedded throughout maternity services.
- Create a culture where concerns are listened to, acted upon and learned from.

This Review belongs to the families who fought tirelessly to have their voices heard. Our role now is to ensure that women and families continue to have independent opportunities to share their experiences as improvements are implemented.

Ends

Notes to editors

1. The Independent Review of Maternity Services at Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, led by Donna Ockenden, was published on 24.06.26. It reviewed the care of more than 2,500 families who received maternity and neonatal care at NUH, predominantly between 2012 and 2025, and is the largest maternity review in the history of the NHS.
2. The full report is available at https://www.ockendenmaternityreview.org.uk/final-report-of-the-independent-review/?fbclid=IwB21leASn3ANleHRuA2FlbQIxMQBzcnRjBmFwcF9pZAWzNTA2ODU1MzE3MjgAAR6asI0VaahUYCIPOXOJcvEkzAmamr7F9QW86CkRuljWPquddL-meeRxTDIDHA_aem_6WMCR5m4CyrLYThf8ozxEg.

3. Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is the independent statutory champion for people who use health and social care services. www.hwnn.org.uk



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