

# Regional Maternity and Neonatal Shared Learning Event

Wednesday 8th March 2023  
Unipart Conference Centre



[www.oxfordahsn.org](http://www.oxfordahsn.org) [info@oxfordahsn.org](mailto:info@oxfordahsn.org) [@OxfordAHSN](https://twitter.com/OxfordAHSN)

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# Women and Birthing People Seeking Sanctuary Project Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust

**Natasha Allen** – Transformation Project Lead Midwife

**Karen Stevens** – Poppy Team Lead Midwife

**Samantha Cobb** – Poppy Team Midwife



# Hospital Public Health Programme Board



- Unique collaboration between Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust and Berkshire West Public Health
- Original aims to improve key hospital based public health issues and embed a public health ethos throughout the Trust
- Partnership began in 2021/22 with four key project areas for focus:
  - Maternity and equity
  - Tobacco dependency (acute inpatient and maternity)
  - Perioperative medicine
  - Staff health checks





# National picture

**229 women** died during or up to six weeks after the end of pregnancy in 2018-20

**10.9 women** per 100,000 giving birth **24% higher** than 2017-19

**27 of their babies** died  
**366 motherless children** remain



A further **289 women** died between six weeks and a year after the end of pregnancy in 2018-20

**13.8 women** per 100,000 giving birth



**9 women** died from covid-19



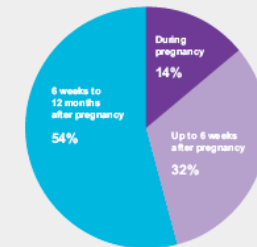
**Excluding** their deaths, **10.5 women** died per 100,000 giving birth

**19% higher** than 2017-19



**1 in 9 women** who died had **severe and multiple disadvantage**

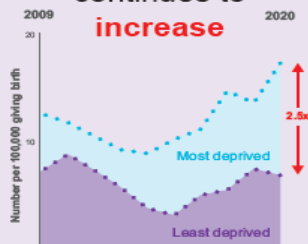
Most women died in the postnatal period **86%**



**Black women** were **3.7x** more likely to die than white women (**34 women** per 100,000 giving birth)

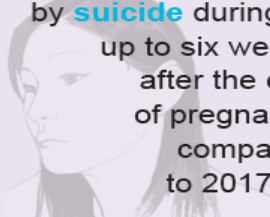
**Asian women** were **1.8x** more likely to die than white women (**16 women** per 100,000 giving birth)

More women from **deprived areas** are dying and this continues to **increase**



**In 2020**, women were **3x** more likely to die by **suicide** during or up to six weeks after the end of pregnancy compared to 2017-19

**1.5 women** per 100,000 giving birth



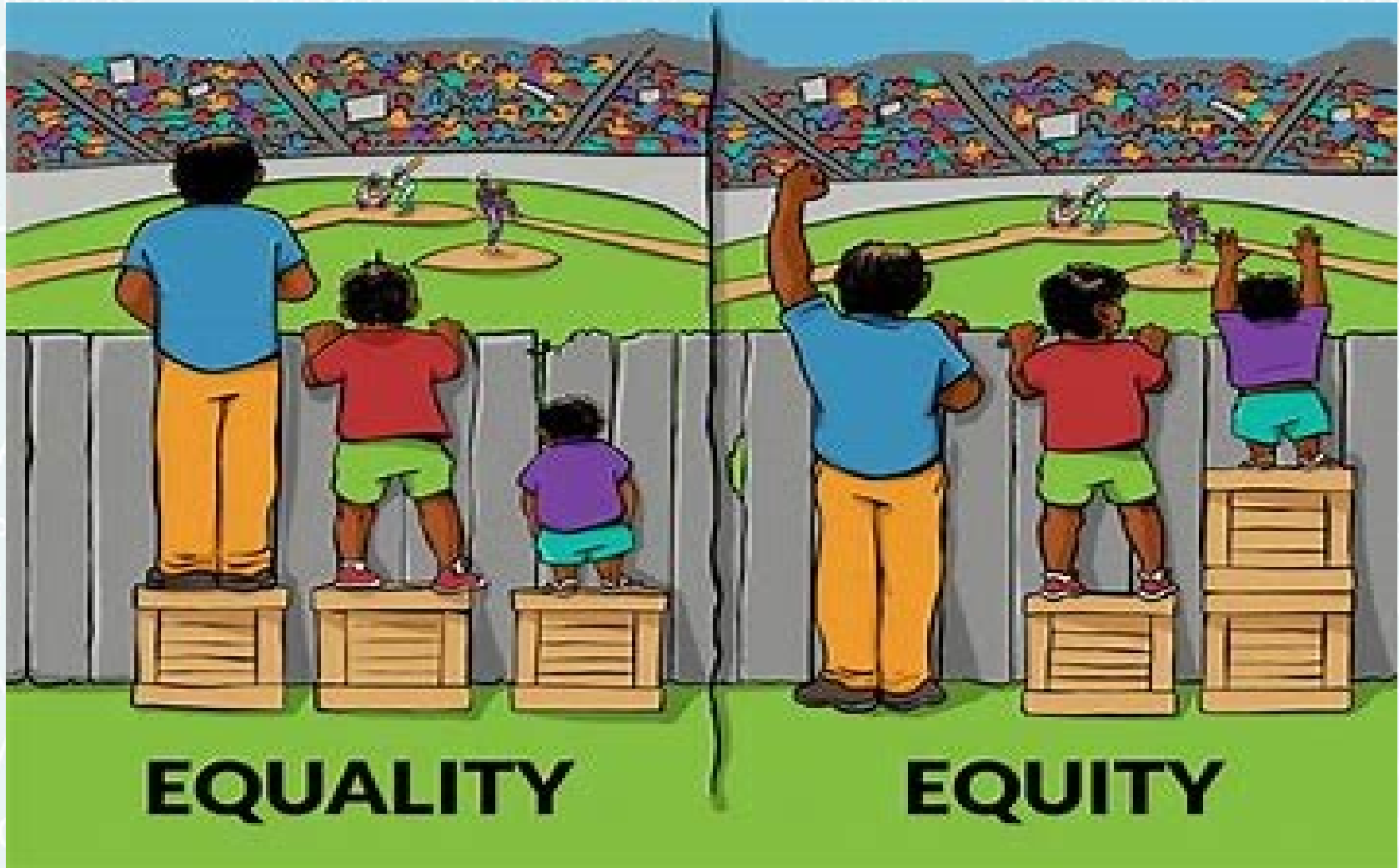
**Missing Voices Report 2022, MBRRACE-UK, 2022**



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**NHS**  
**Royal Berkshire**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Equity



**EQUALITY**

**EQUITY**

# Maternity Equity - Project Aim

To improve access to maternity services for women and birthing people, and their families, in the Berkshire West area



- Appreciative Inquiry methodology and Asset Based Community Development to explore the needs of the population and design services aiming for equity
- Explored all maternity areas – families seeking sanctuary became the focus due to them being a vulnerable group most likely to experience the poorest maternity outcomes.
- Conducted focus groups with key stakeholders including midwives, local community assets
- Identified needs of this population, barriers to care and additional services that could improve care and increase equity

# Women and Birthing People Seeking Sanctuary maternity clinic



- **Creates** a one stop shop environment for women and birthing people seeking sanctuary and their families
- **Offers** a range of clinical and social support in one place that will aim to address the health and social needs
- **Builds** trust and confidence in health services
- **Uses** local and national data to ensure that appropriate services are provided for the best outcomes

# Women and Birthing People Seeking Sanctuary maternity clinic



- **Provide** non-biased people centred care personalised to their ethnicity, culture and general needs
- **Expand** care provided to be inclusive of their wider family
- **Address** serious case review results linking worse outcomes for babies of fathers with poor antenatal care and education engagement
- **Create** a safe space for sensitive conversations allowing women, birthing people and families to build trust in midwives and services



# Women and Birthing People Seeking Sanctuary maternity clinic



- Four clinics have taken place so far at the Sun Street Children's Centre in central Reading
- Clinics run alternate months – July 2022, through to at least July 2023 and beyond
- Barriers broken down for these families (bespoke space, transport, children and partners can attend, all language needs catered to, resources for the children)
- Women and birthing people and their families able to engage with a number of clinical services and professionals in one place
- Provided with essentials for baby arrival such as birthing bags donated by The Cowshed

# Women and Birthing People Seeking Sanctuary maternity clinic



## ○ Core services

- Routine checks with a midwife – pre and post birth
- Antenatal education for all women and birthing people
- Partners/Dad's education and psychological safety
- Interpreters for all languages

## ○ Also available

- Sexual health advice
- Health visitor consultation
- Consultant Obstetrician
- Refugee support services
- Mental health support
- Maternity Voices

# Women and Birthing People Seeking Sanctuary maternity clinic



- 52 families come through the clinic space – with some families attending all four sessions (January 2022)
- Countries of origin (Predominantly - Afganistan, Syria, Ukraine)
- Languages spoken (Pashto, Farsi, Ukrainian, Russian, Tigrenia, Dari, Spanish, French – Current most commonly spoken languages in maternity - Romanian, Polish, Urdu, Arabic and Bulgarian)
- Serious maternity related issues detected that would've gone unseen (Reduced fetal movements, abdominal pain, chest pain, safeguarding)
- Other health issues (i.e sexual health, mental health)
- Helping address wider social issues addressed (i.e housing, developing friendships and reducing isolation, food)

# How families are engaged with...



- Poppy Team at the RBFT – provide enhanced care for vulnerable families in maternity e.g. safeguarding, mental health, seeking sanctuary, domestic abuse.
- All families seeking sanctuary are referred to the care of the Poppy Team and they already provide their routine antenatal care – families are referred by the Poppy midwives to the clinic. Finding it helps having the existing trusting relationship in place.
- We have developed relationships with Reading Refugee Support as a result of this work. If an expectant family or new postnatal family comes into the area they can directly refer into the Poppy Team and we can support them to navigate the system.



# Seeking Sanctuary Story



# Women and Birthing People Seeking Sanctuary delivery team



- Natasha Allen – RBFT Project Lead
- Ross Little – Berkshire West Public Health
- Katie Badger – Berkshire West Public Health
- Karen Stevens – Poppy Team Lead
- Sam Cobb – Poppy Team Midwife
- Kaleigh Hannibus – Poppy Team Midwife
- Kate Rabjohns and Julia Tassano-Edgecombe – Sexual Health
- Holly Hukin – Student Midwife
- Lisa Vine – RBFT Comms Support

# Partner organisations and services



- Compass Recovery College (Mental Health Support)
- RBFT – Meet PEET (Patient Engagement and Experience Team)
- BHFT – Health Visiting
- Royal Berkshire Maternity Voices Partnership
- Health on the Move Van
- Reading Refugee Support
- New Directions
- The Cowshed
- Volunteers



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# Next Steps

- Evaluation
- Sustainability
- Taking the clinic from project to business as usual
- Creating a Toolkit so that other organisations can replicate the model

Thank you!



Any questions?

**Natasha Allen** – Transformation Project Lead Midwife  
Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust  
[natasha.allen@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:natasha.allen@royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

