

Greater Manchester Equity and Equality Action Plan 2022 – 2027

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is an equity and equality action plan?

The Greater Manchester Maternity Equity and Equality action plan describes the steps that will be taken over the next five years to improve maternity and perinatal services in the region.

Equity means that all mothers and babies will achieve health outcomes that are as good as the groups with the best health outcomes. For this, maternity and neonatal services need to respond to each person's unique health and social situation – with increasing support as health inequalities increase – so that care is safe and personal for all.

Our plan has a particular focus on how we will improve outcomes for those who experience health inequalities, such as people from Black, Asian and Mixed ethnic groups and those living in deprived areas.

2. Why is this action plan needed?

The [MBRRACE-UK reports](#) about maternal and perinatal mortality show worse outcomes for those from Black, Asian and Mixed ethnic groups and those living in the most deprived areas. This must be addressed.

In Greater Manchester and Eastern Cheshire (GMEC), some of our maternity outcome measures are not where we need them to be, with some measures, including stillbirth rates, increasing through the pandemic and we are yet to see them return to pre-pandemic levels or align with national averages.

We have completed data gathering and analysis of our population. This highlighted some interesting factors that our action plan will address. For instance, over 40% of our women/birthing people from a Black, Asian or Mixed background book a midwife appointment later than 10 weeks of pregnancy. The earlier maternity care is accessed, the better the outcome. We will therefore address this in the plan to achieve greater equity of care. We can then carry out screening tests earlier on in pregnancy. Some of these tests, such as the identification of sickle cell anaemia, are highly prevalent in the Black community.

The action plan describes the steps we will take over the next five years to address gaps like this and improve outcomes for those most in need.

3. Who was involved in developing the plan?

The action plan was coproduced with many people from across Greater Manchester including:

- Local people and communities, especially those from groups who experience worse outcomes
- Members of the Local Maternity and Neonatal System
- Commissioners
- Office for Health Improvement & Disparities
- Universities
- Local community and faith groups
- Maternity services providers
- Voluntary Community Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations

4. Who is responsible for delivering the plan?

All maternity providers in Greater Manchester and Eastern Cheshire (GMEC) alongside community groups and agencies are working together in our Local Maternity and Neonatal System to improve care.

The Local Maternity and Neonatal System will oversee the delivery of the action plan.

The Local Maternity and Neonatal System group is responsible to NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care

5. How will this work make a difference to the care mothers and their families receive?

The plan will improve outcomes for women, people and their babies who are from Black, Asian and mixed backgrounds and those who live in deprived areas. By taking action we will help to reduce health inequalities and improve the life chances of all children born in Greater Manchester and Eastern Cheshire. We also intend to diversify our workforce to include staff from these backgrounds, reduce disparity and improve staff experience.

6. How can I get involved to help improve local maternity services?

One of the best ways to get involved is by joining your local Maternity Voices Partnership. Maternity Voices Partnerships are groups of women, birthing people and families, midwives, doctors and commissioners working together to review and develop local maternity care. [Click here](#) to visit the MVP website for more information.

If you have recently used maternity services you can share your experience directly with the hospital or via the [MVP feedback survey](#).

7. I am currently pregnant and concerned about my care, what should I do?

If you're currently pregnant and concerned about your care, we'd encourage you to speak to your midwife in the first instance.

Alternatively, you could get in touch with the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) at the hospital. [Click here](#) to find your local PALS contact details.

The maternity website 'My Birth My Choice also' has details of your local maternity services and other information that might help you.

<https://www.mybirthmychoice.co.uk/>

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