

Description

‘We all need to work harder to end racial and social disparities in maternity care,’ says RCM

Press Release

?11 July 2024

The Royal College of Midwives (RCM) has renewed its call for urgent action at all levels to end racial and socioeconomic disparities. The call comes following the publication of the latest MBRRACE-UK report which shows that babies of Black ethnicity are more than twice as likely to be stillborn than white babies and worse pregnancy outcomes for non-white women and those from deprived backgrounds.

Commenting on the report RCM Chief Executive, Gill Walton, said:

“It should not be the case in the twenty-first century that your baby’s chance of survival is determined by the colour of its skin or where it is born. But sadly, as this report shows, that is the experience of too many families. It is not enough, though to express our shock and sorrow: we have to act. All of us involved in commissioning and delivering maternity services, from governments to midwives, must work together to address these disparities.

“From training and education to care and support, midwives and maternity support workers need to be supported both to understand the increased risk and to provide enhanced and personalised care for Black and Asian women and those from disadvantaged backgrounds.”

> This programme will help to ensure the curriculum supports the care of non-white women, including how some conditions may present differently on non-white skin.

The RCM is already taking steps to address this need. Its ground breaking work on decolonising the midwifery curriculum will mean that midwives are taught in a way that reflects the communities they serve. This programme will help to ensure the curriculum supports the care of non-white women, including how some conditions may present differently on non-white skin. In May, the College also launched a new tool to enable midwives and other healthcare workers to assess the needs of pregnant women, and to deliver the most appropriate package of care. The Maternity Disadvantage Assessment Tool (MatDAT) outlines a range of socio-economic circumstances which may impact on the health and wellbeing of the pregnant women, and advises the steps to be taken.

Gill added:

“We know that the new Westminster Government shares our ambition to reach a point where the outcomes for pregnant women and their babies are no longer defined by their ethnicity or their backgrounds. We have already written to the new Health Secretary setting out our willingness to work with him on this issue as a matter of urgency.”

ENDS

Category

1. News & Views

Tags

1. anti-racism
2. racism
3. RCM

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