

Maternity Survey 2023: Briefing for trusts on informing 16 and 17 year olds about the survey

Throughout February 2023, midwives must inform all 16 and 17 year olds, who give birth in their trust about the Maternity Survey and give them details on how to opt out if they so wish. Please read the information below on how to do this.

What is new for 2023?

A new addition to the Maternity Survey for 2023 is a booster sample of eligible maternity service users from ethnic minority backgrounds during January and March 2023. Full details are provided below.

Introduction

Approval for the Maternity Survey 2022 was sought under Section 251 of the NHS Act 2006. The survey methodology was reviewed by the Health Research Authority (HRA) for approval. Their Confidentiality Advisory Group (CAG) granted support on the condition that 16 and 17 year olds are informed directly of the survey and given the opportunity to opt out. This is because the cohort of service users aged 16 and 17 are legally considered to be children and the response rate from this group is particularly low. We will be using the same sampling approach in 2023 and therefore expect that support will be contingent on this condition.

Who should be approached by staff?

Trust staff (usually midwives) must inform any 16 and 17 year olds who give birth in their trust during the sample period about the survey and provide them with details on how they can opt out if they so wish. The sample data from the 2022 survey shows that there were only, on average, one young person aged 16 or 17 at each trust. We believe it is therefore manageable for staff at trusts to have a discussion with each individual about the survey.

Who is not eligible to participate?

Respondents will be removed from the survey sample if it was known that the pregnancy was concealed, if the baby is to be taken into care or if the baby has died either during or since delivery. If any of these criteria apply, then it would not be necessary to inform the individual about the survey.

When does *my trust* need to approach 16 and 17 year olds?

All trusts should be raising awareness of the survey with young people aged 16 or 17 years who have had a live birth in **February 2023 (the core sampling month)**.

In addition, for the Maternity Survey 2023, all 16 or 17 year olds from ethnic minority groups¹ who have had a live birth in your trust during January and March 2023 should be approached by a member of staff about the survey.

This step is not required from Trusts that have to sample back to January for their core sample, as set out below.

Trusts with lower birth rates: January and February 2023

Some trusts have a lower birth rate than others. If your trust does not have enough eligible respondents in February (a final sample of 300 records), you will need to extend the core sampling month into January 2023. Staff in these Trusts should approach 16 and 17 year olds who have had a live birth during January and February 2023.

The table below sets out the timing for raising awareness:

	January 2023	February 2023	March 2023
Trusts with lower birth rates - fewer than 300 eligible persons who gave birth in February	All 16 and 17 year olds	All 16 and 17 year olds	Not applicable
Trusts with a minimum of 300 eligible persons who gave birth in February	16 or 17 year olds from ethnic minority groups only	All 16 and 17 year olds	16 or 17 year olds from ethnic minority groups only

When should 16 and 17 year olds be approached by staff?

We recommend that a member of staff talks to 16 and 17 year olds about the survey when they are being discharged from hospital. If the respondent has a home birth, a midwife should mention the survey at a time considered most appropriate following the birth.

What information should be given out and how?

16 and 17 year olds should be provided with the information leaflet (<https://nhssurveys.org/surveys/survey/04-maternity/>) informing them that there is a national maternity survey taking place.

¹ All ethnic groups with exception of White English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British, White Irish, White Gypsy or Irish Traveller any other White background, or Not stated. A detailed breakdown can be accessed in the appendix.

Those who give birth during the sampling months of February and, where applicable, January and March, may be sent a questionnaire in about 2-3 months' time asking about their experiences of the care received.

The information sheet explains:

- The purpose of the survey;
- How their responses will be used to help improve the quality of care provided; and
- That all answers are confidential.

The survey is voluntary and so the respondent does not have to take part. The information leaflet reiterates that if they choose not to take part it will not affect the care they receive from the NHS in any way.

The information sheet also explains that they can opt out of the survey once they have received the invitation, i.e. contacting the helpline via email or phone, or by returning a blank questionnaire once received. If a participant wishes to opt out before they actually receive the invitation, then they should be given the contact details of a member of trust staff who can ensure they are removed from the sample before the survey commences. Such cases must be logged by your trust and referred to during the sampling for the survey.

Ideally, respondents should not be asked for a decision on opting out at that stage and should be advised to read the information sheet in their own time and call the number or email provided by the end of March if they do not wish to take part in the survey.

The aim is for the member of staff to draw attention to the survey, to briefly discuss it if necessary and refer them to the helpline number, or email address, if they have any queries or concerns.

Thank you for your assistance with the Maternity Survey. If you have any queries or feedback, please contact your trust survey lead or email MaternityCoordination@ipsos.com.