

**Health, Social Care and Early Years  
Briefing for Incoming Cabinet Secretary & Ministerial Team  
September 2024**

**Contents**

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#### Hot issues

**Maternity and neonatal services** – these represent critical areas of care requiring improvement across Wales including achieving a digital programme for maternity services in Wales in the face of extreme financial constraints. Swansea Bay University Health Board is now in enhanced monitoring for maternity and neonatal service and has commissioned an external review of its services – there is significant and ongoing media interest. Staffing within maternity and neonatal services is a recognised risk area and a review was commissioned to understand the number of midwives required to meet the future needs of families. The findings from this report are now informing the development of the Strategic Perinatal Workforce plan by HEIW. In addition, the *Thirlwall Inquiry*, examining the events at the Countess of Chester Hospital maternity service following the conviction of Lucy Letby will be relevant to Wales given the numbers of Welsh babies involved.

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Organisation	Current Status (July 2024)
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Swansea Bay University Health Board	Redacted Level 3 (Enhanced monitoring) for maternity and neonatal

Swansea Bay University Health Board are escalated to level 3 for maternity and neonatal services following concerns related to staffing levels, quality and safety issues including those arising from the HIW inspection report and level 4 for performance and outcomes.

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