

# MMHWB's Hot Issues Brief: Health, Social Care & Early Years

9 December 2024

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7. **Swansea Bay University Health Board Maternity Incidents – 21/22 November 2024**

During the 21 and 22 November 2024, 2 maternity related incidents occurred within Swansea Bay University Health Board (SBUHB).

**Incident 1:** Approx. midnight Thursday 21 Nov, an out of guidance home birth took place. A 25-year-old first time mum who declined induction and DNA'd scans, despite a large baby identified antenatally went into labour at home. The labour was spontaneous and progressed to full dilatation. Upon descent, the baby's head delivered but the shoulders stuck (shoulder Dystocia). At birth, the baby had no signs of life and required resuscitation. The Emergency Medical Retrieval and Transfer Service (EMRTS) arrived 25 mins after being called and the baby was resuscitated successfully, however, no brain activity was noted when assessed in hospital (22 Nov), so care is likely to be withdrawn. After the birth, whilst still at home, the mother started to haemorrhage, this was managed by midwifery staff until the ambulance arrived. The mother is now in stable condition in hospital.

**Incident 2:** On Friday 22 Nov (01.38 am) a 28-year-old woman, pregnant with her first baby at 25+6 weeks, had a history of chronic pancreatitis pre pregnancy with a flare up at 14 weeks pregnancy. A week ago, she experienced headaches and attended antenatal assessment unit. Blood pressure was raised; however, bloods were within normal parameters. After being reviewed by obstetricians, a decision was made to have a community midwife follow up and close monitoring of BP.

On Thursday evening, the woman went out for a meal, felt unwell, was vomiting and experiencing blurred vision. On attending maternity assessment at Singleton hospital that evening, the woman was seen immediately, and observations were stable. She was transferred to the labour ward for medical review and deteriorated, becoming confused, and was taken for a CT scan, accompanied by an anaesthetist. She arrested in CT, was intubated but resuscitation was unsuccessful. Following the resus council guidance, the baby was delivered by c-section, resuscitation commenced for baby but sadly no signs of life noted, therefore confirmed as stillbirth.

SBUHB have assigned a family contact and external review is being requested. The clinical psychology team attended the unit on Friday for a staff debrief and an EMERTS debrief has also been undertaken.

The Welsh Government has received formal confirmation of incident 2 via early warning notice (EWN). The ENW confirms that a medical examiner and coroner review took place on 22 November 2024. The maternal death

pathway has been completed and the lead midwife for Quality, Safety and Risk (QSR) is the point of contact for the family.

The EWN for incident 1 is currently outstanding however, we have been assured it is in the system and will update accordingly. It is not yet known if the care has been withdrawn and incident 1 will become a neonatal death.

Lines to take:

- I was very sad to learn of the recent maternity related incidents within Swansea Bay Health board, my thoughts are with the families and all those involved.
- The health board have assigned a family contact and an external review is being requested.

Provided by <redacted>: 25 November 2024

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