# APPG Report Reveals Severe Flaws in Maternal Care in England Leading to Traumatic Childbirth Experiences



A comprehensive report by a British all-party parliamentary group (APPG) has highlighted severe flaws in maternal care in England, emphasizing that one in three women experience traumatic childbirth with some suffering from long-term consequences. The inquiry, led by MPs Theo Clarke and Rosie Duffield, collected testimonies from 1,311 women, revealing instances where they were mocked, ignored, or inadequately cared for during labor. Disturbingly, it was noted that hospitals frequently concealed these failures.

The report, released on May 13, 2024, indicated that such traumatic experiences could lead to PTSD, affecting the mothers' ability to bond with their children and return to work. The annual rate of PTSD development following childbirth is estimated to be between 4% and 5% of the roughly 600,000 women who give birth in England each year.

Victims reported life-altering injuries, including severe tearing leading to chronic pain and incontinence. Moreover, some reported having children with permanent disabilities due to birth injuries. The APPG report underscored the systemic issue of poor postnatal care and inadequate communication during childbirth, which exacerbated the trauma.

In response to these findings, the group recommended several measures, including the appointment of a maternity commissioner and the establishment of specialist postnatal services to improve care and support. Furthermore, the need to educate expecting mothers about the potential risks associated with childbirth was highlighted.

NHS England’s chief executive, Amanda Pritchard, recognized the inadequacies revealed in the report and outlined ongoing improvements, including the introduction of pelvic health clinics and expanded maternal mental health support. Women’s Health Minister Maria Caulfield issued an apology for the persistent failures in maternity services, acknowledging the need for significant reforms.

This report builds on concerns already raised by the Care Quality Commission in its last annual report and follows major inquiries into maternity care at several NHS trusts. The English health system currently faces a steep financial burden with £1.1 billion spent annually on legal claims relating to medical negligence in maternity care.