# Families Demand Public Inquiry into Maternity Services at University Hospitals Sussex NHS Trust



**Families Call for Public Inquiry into Maternity Services at NHS Trust**

Families of nine babies who died at University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust between 2021 and 2023 are calling for a public inquiry into its maternity services. They urge intervention to prevent further unnecessary deaths, citing that four mothers nearly lost their lives due to alleged failings in care.

The Trust is already under police investigation for alleged medical negligence in its neurosurgery and general surgery departments from 2015 to 2021. Reports by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Royal College of Surgeons have criticized the Trust for poor leadership and a "culture of fear" in its surgery department.

The fresh allegations concern the Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton and Worthing Hospital. Parents reported a reluctance from maternity teams to act urgently, dismissing serious symptoms like reduced fetal movements, and relying on telephone assessments rather than close monitoring.

The CQC rated maternity services at the Brighton hospital as "inadequate" in 2021, and despite some improvements, this rating remains unchanged. Worthing Hospital's services are rated as "requires improvement."

One poignant case involved Robyn Davis, whose baby Orlando died at Worthing Hospital in 2021 due to a staff failure to recognize her hyponatremia during labor, which an inquest found to be contributed by neglect. Another case is that of Abigail Fowler Miller, who died in January 2022 at the Brighton hospital after her mother experienced massive internal bleeding that midwives missed over-the-phone.

In response, Dr. Maggie Davies from the Trust expressed sincere apologies, noting that while their outcomes for mothers and babies are better than most trusts, there is a need for continual improvement.

The families are advocating for a national inquiry into these and similar cases across other NHS trusts.