

# Improving Maternity Services through data insight & intelligence

## The Challenge

The *Ockenden Reports* published December 2020 & March 2022 cover immediate actions to improve care & safety in maternity services. Historic delays in maternity care have largely been hidden except when a Serious Incident or complaint arose. Cheshire and Merseyside (C&M) Local Maternity and Neonatal System (LMNS) had little system-wide data and intelligence to inform service improvements.

## The Programme

I.H.S were commissioned in July 22 to support Cheshire and Merseyside LMNS to establish, real-time reporting and intelligence to provide the LMNS with the required *Ockenden* assurance. Utilising our existing methodology, we developed at pace an *Ockenden Assurance Framework*. We quickly established a collaborative system-wide approach, co-designing and delivering a real-time *e-SITREP* reporting system, providing data and intelligence on capacity and delays in maternity care and Operational Pressure Escalation Levels for bed capacity, triage breaches and delays in elective work.

## Our Approach & Methodology

We established closer integrated working with partners across the LMNS including Heads of Midwifery (Maternity Safety Champions), matrons & obstetricians involved in the development of the *e-SITREP*. Using PDSA cycles we co-designed a solution to quickly deliver real-time data and intelligence on capacity and delays in maternity care.

Weekly GOLD meetings of all Providers were established to support safe care and review the *e-SITREP* data to identify pressures requiring immediate action or escalation, enabling a coordinated system-wide response.

The *e-SITREP* reports to the C&M Quality Safety Surveillance Group and Integrated Care Board bringing visibility & understanding of staffing and acuity issues to drive improvement in patient safety & service provision.

## The Impact


Increased provision and visibility of real-time data has improved collaboration across the system.

Adopting a QI approach, we have facilitated shared learning, understanding and in-depth reviews of data quality & service provision, contributing to improvements in patient safety.

Analysis of trend activity over time has established connections regarding workforce challenges that are impacting on service delivery eg. triage breaches & delays in Inductions of Labour (IOL). A QI approach ensures action on this data to improve service delivery for patients.

- The LMNS achieved a significant decrease in maternity service diverts through visibility of data and the establishment of a mutual aid approach. Between 01/04/21 – 31/08/22 there were a total of 60 diverts across C&M (average 3.5 diverts/month) with a range of 2.5hrs - 38hrs on divert, resulting in 198 women diverted. This improved significantly by 31/03/23, with only 10 diverts (average 1.4 per month) ranging from 2hrs to 15.2hrs on divert. Many Providers are now reporting zero diverts.
- The *e-SITREP* has brought to the surface hidden delays particularly in IOL and triage pathways, some of the highest risk areas. Analysis of triage breaches was recorded variably across providers and was not available centrally. This has now been solved thanks to the *e-SITREP* tool; data from





which is now driving service improvement. This has led to a system-wide approach to safe staffing and management of high peaks of acuity in a timely manner, avoiding emergency divers.

We quickly established our credibility through the *e-SITREP* and accompanying approach, directly impacting on quality improvements in patient safety & forward planning thanks to earlier mitigation, as well as identifying longer term trends and solutions. The *e-SITREP* has enabled:

- Identification of real-time issues impacting on the quality & safety of maternity care, e.g. triage delays and delays in IOL
- An understanding of capacity (beds), theatre utilisation (elective Caesarean Sections) and the impact of mutual aid transfers inside/ outside of the LMNS
- Data sharing across C&M to support improvements in data quality, reporting and improvement
- Service design & delivery underpinned by robust evidence-based data, identifying potential patient safety issues regarding staffing, delays in care, and best practice

## Conclusion

We have a continuous improvement approach to our data intelligence. The *e-SITREP* is a live reporting tool that is constantly evolving in response to user feedback and data insight. Through visibility of data it is possible to drive improvements in clinical outcomes and women's experiences along the pathway: helps better planning in the long term: reducing risk and clinical incidents over time. This ultimately results in improvements in the care and safety of maternity services.

Our team together with Cheshire & Merseyside LMNS were delighted to have received a Highly Commended at the HSJ Patient Safety Awards 2023 for Safety Improvement through new Technology. This accolade recognises our ongoing innovative and collaborative partnerships with our clients and our commitment to improving patient care.

