



**We support
twins, triplets
and more...**

News release

Thursday October 14

Charity calls for urgent action to save babies' lives as figures released today show twin stillbirth rate is increasing

Stillbirth in twins has increased, according to figures released today in the MBRRACE-UK Perinatal Mortality Surveillance Report for Births 2019.

In 2019 there were 6.68 twin stillbirths per 1,000 births, which has risen from 6.07 in 2018 meaning that in 2019, women expecting multiples were 2.2 times more likely to experience stillbirth than singletons (compared to 2.03 times in 2018).

The twin stillbirth rate is one of the highest rates of stillbirth in all groups identified in the report, except Black families where the rate is 7.23.

Neonatal deaths in twins have slightly decreased but have increased for triplets and more.

In 2019 multiples were 4.1 times more likely to experience neonatal death than singletons.

MBRRACE-UK recommends enhancement of current programmes in order to accelerate the reduction of stillbirths and neonatal deaths to meet national targets, with an emphasis on reducing rates of preterm birth, particularly the most extreme preterm group which multiple births form part of.

The Twins Trust Maternity Engagement quality improvement project (T-MEP) could make a huge difference to saving babies lives if rolled out across the UK.

In just 24 months, working with 30 maternity units in England units, they saw a

- 23% reduction in neonatal admissions
- 18% reduction in neonatal deaths
- 7% reduction in stillbirths
- 6% reduction in emergency c-sections

If all units followed the guidance and made improvements these figures would be much higher.

Shauna Leven, CEO of Twins Trust, said: “Government and health professionals must take action now to avoid further unnecessary deaths.

“It is critical that maternity units adhere to NICE multiple birth guidance and our [T-MEP quality improvement project](#) can help them do this - and save lives.

“If we could expand our programme, it would contribute considerably to improving maternity safety as well as contributing 5-7% towards the national ambition.

“These figures released today show urgent action must be taken and we have a project that can help save twin babies’ lives.”

In the report, MBRRACE-UK also highlighted previous recommendations it has made which require improved implementation. These include ensuring healthcare providers have implemented national initiatives to reduce stillbirth and neonatal deaths and are monitoring their impact on reducing preterm birth.

Again, the Twins Trust Maternity Engagement Project can support healthcare providers in doing this.

The report states that all four UK nations have initiatives in place to reduce perinatal mortality rates.

“Although the initial target in England to reduce mortality rates by 20% by 2020 has been met for stillbirths, the smaller reduction in neonatal mortality rates suggests that this target will not be met for neonatal deaths.

“Nevertheless, even for stillbirths there is still much work to be done to achieve the English Department of Health’s revised target of a 50% reduction in mortality rates by 2025 which would result in more favourable comparisons with other similar high-income countries.”

Notes to Journalists

For further information please contact Alyson Chorley alysonchorley@twinstrust.org or pressoffice@twinstrust.org call 01252 332344 / 07791 383494.

Read the full report here.

<https://oxfile.ox.ac.uk/oxfile/work/extBox?id=10801767F2B75D239B3>

MBRRACE contacts: Professor Jenny Kurinczuk, Professor of Perinatal Epidemiology

Email: jenny.kurinczuk@npeu.ox.ac.uk PA: Dagmar Hutt – dagmar.hutt@npeu.ox.ac.uk

Twins Trust is the only UK-wide charity dedicated to improving the lives and wellbeing of families with twins, triplets or more. Representing 20,000 members and 100 local clubs in the UK, Twins Trust provides help and support to both parents and professionals to meet the unique challenges faced by multiple birth families. We invest in research to save lives, change lives and create better futures for multiple birth families. We also run a unique quality improvement project at Maternity Units to encourage and help with adherence to NICE QS46.

For further information, please visit www.twinstrust.org

1. Follow us on: Twitter/Facebook/Insta @twinstrust
2. For confidential and emotional support for families with multiples, please call Twinline which is staffed by trained volunteers that are parents of multiples and can offer support on sleeping, feeding, crying, behaviour, discipline, school issues or special needs. It is free to call on 0800 138 0509 and is open Monday to Friday from 10am–1pm and from 7pm–10pm.