# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Maternity Services – Cwm Taf University Health Board** |
| **DATE**  | **5 October 2018** |
| **BY** | **Vaughan Gething, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services** |

Members will be aware of the statement issued by Cwm Taf University Health Board in respect of maternity services over the last 24 hours.  The Health Board has confirmed that following an internal review of their incident reporting process a significant number of serious incidents, including the deaths of some babies, have now been reported and are being fully investigated.

I share everyone’s concern about the seriousness of the matter and the need for reassurance. Patient safety is the overriding priority for both myself and NHS Wales. Our main concern is for the welfare of mothers and babies.

My officials are in regular contact with the health board to gain immediate assurance on the investigation and actions needed to ensure the service is safe for women and babies.

We are actively engaged with the Health Board to agree the support which is needed to strengthen the health board’s maternity service, both in the immediate and longer term. I have also spoken to the Chair to express my concerns and to seek direct assurance that he and the Board are taking all the necessary actions. It is essential that all those using Cwm Taf services can be reassured of excellent safe and compassionate care.

I recognise the range of actions and activities being undertaken within the Health Board and specifically those actions it is putting in place to ensure services are supported with immediate effect. Given the seriousness of this situation, I have decided that an independent external review should be commissioned by the Welsh Government. I have therefore asked the Chief Medical and Nursing Officers for Wales to contact directly the Royal Colleges of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Midwifery to request they instigate and undertake a full review of what has happened and what now needs to happen to ensure these services are as safe as possible as quickly as possible.

I will also make an oral statement to the Assembly on this matter early next week when I will set out in more detail the actions being taken.