# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Publication of Independent Maternity Services Oversight Panel Quarterly Progress Report - Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board** |
| **DATE** | **20 January 2020** |
| **BY** | **Vaughan Gething AM, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

As Members are aware, in April 2019, I published the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the Royal College of Midwives joint report, following their review of maternity services at the former Cwm Taf University Health Board. One of my immediate actions following receipt of this report was to place maternity services into special measures and establish the Independent Maternity Services Oversight Panel.

I issued a statement to Members in October providing an update on the progress of the Panel in overseeing the necessary improvements in maternity services. I also published the Panel’s [Autumn Quarterly Progress Report](https://gov.wales/independent-maternity-services-oversight-panel-quarterly-report-september-2019) as well as their [Clinical Review Strategy](https://gov.wales/independent-maternity-services-oversight-panel-clinical-review-strategy) at this time.

I have recently received the Panel’s [Winter Quarterly Progress Report](https://gov.wales/independent-maternity-services-oversight-panel-winter-progress-report-2020) and am publishing this today ahead of providing an Oral Statement tomorrow. This second update from the Panel provides a comprehensive picture of all the work in train and what has been achieved to date. I’m pleased that the Panel has confirmed that the health board has made good progress over the past three months and that they are cautiously optimistic that longer term sustainable improvements will be achieved. They have however made it clear that there is still much to do. The Panel has set out its expectations for the areas needing particular focus over the next few months and I expect the health board to continue to work at pace to achieve this.

As well as looking forward, ensuring improvements are made for future services, the Panel have the dual function of looking back and reviewing previous maternity care to maximise opportunities for learning which can feed into the improvement process. Their Clinical Review Strategy published in October outlines their approach to this.

Over the past three months considerable progress has been made to enable the reviews to get underway. I’m pleased to report that a large team of experienced, independent clinical reviewers has been recruited. This includes midwives, obstetricians, neonatologists and anaesthetists. They began their work in December, attending induction events to familiarise themselves with the proposed process and some have been involved in a successful pilot exercise to test the system that has been put in place. Advocacy support for women and families whose care will be reviewed has also been secured through the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Health Council.

As a consequence, the Panel’s clinical review programme is now underway. At the beginning of January the Panel contacted all women whose care will be reviewed during the first phase to explain the process, including how they can be involved if that is their wish, and how they can be supported to do so. It is vital that women and families remain at the heart of these reviews. The first phase of clinical reviews will focus on the care of mothers and babies between 01 January 2016 and 30 September 2018.

This is a large and very sensitive exercise involving the review of around 140 pregnancies and will take some time to complete in a thorough and inclusive way. Unfortunately, I cannot provide any further timescales at this stage. I am sure all Members agree, it is vital these reviews are completed thoroughly and not quickly.

I look forward to updating Members further on all aspects of the improvements needed in response to the organisation’s escalated status in the Chamber tomorrow.