New National Child Mortality Database to reduce premature mortality announced

A new National Child Mortality Database (NCMD) is being developed that aims to reduce premature mortality by analysing data on all deaths in children in England, aged between birth and their 18th birthday.

Around 4000 children and adolescents die every year before their 18th birthday in England. The UK has an excessive infant and child mortality rate in comparison with EU countries with comparable economies and healthcare systems.

Understanding children's deaths and translating that learning into actions to reduce potentially avoidable deaths is of central importance and is why NHS England has prioritised establishing a National Child Mortality Database.

The database, funded initially for four years and commissioned by Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP) on behalf of NHS England, will work closely with Child Death Overview Panels (CDOPs) which review all child deaths in England. The data will be analysed at the Child Mortality Data Unit at the University of Bristol and will be used to inform strategic improvements in health and social care for children in England and to help health and social care providers to learn about how they can reduce child deaths.

The NCMD programme and its associated workstreams are being led by the University of Bristol, in collaboration with University of Oxford, UCLPartners and QES. Key stakeholders, including representation from bereaved parents, will contribute to developing the core dataset, metrics and meaningful reporting.

Dr Karen Luyt, the NCMD Programme Lead from Bristol Medical School at the University of Bristol, said: "Our collaborative partnership of experts in the University of Bristol, University of Oxford, UCLPartners and QES is privileged to be contributing to the national child mortality programme. Bringing national data together to be analysed centrally will provide additional learning beyond what can be achieved within local systems. It will mean patterns and trends in children's death can be identified and action taken to help prevent the risk of future deaths".