Agenda

Closing the Gap meeting 11th Nov 2026: Impact of Temporary Maternity Service Closure upon Ilfracombe

Closing the Gap group members, plus guests: Vanessa Purday – Chief Medical Officer RDUH, Nikki Soper – Designated Safeguarding Lead within the Trust's Maternity Service and Sarah Delbridge – Engagement Manager from the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust,

Date: 11.11.26

Time: 1pm

Location: Teams

1. Welcome and Introductions - 1300 Sara Wilson

- Introductions and apologies

2. Purpose of the Meeting - 1310 Sara Wilson

- Discuss the impact of the temporary closure of maternity services upon Ilfracombe residents
- Establish links between RDUH and the Closing the Gap subgroup
- Renew a focus on partnership working
- Consider actions to mitigate impacts on families and vulnerable residents

3. Impact on Residents - voices of lived experience 1315

- Additional challenges in Ilfracombe - cost, poor transport, length of journey, - cumulative disadvantages of inequality
- Experiences of pregnant women and families affected by the closure, incl the father's voice
- Travel and transport challenges, access issues for those without private transport
- Impact on low-income households and disadvantaged groups

4. Health Inequalities and Equity/Risk Assessment 1325

- Increased risk of accessing care at a greater distance
- clinical incidents

- Assessment of disproportionate impacts on vulnerable populations
- Discussion of equality and accessibility considerations

5. Transport and Access Solutions - 1335

- Patient transport provision
- Emergency travel arrangements
- Communication of available support

6. Communication and Public Engagement - 1345

- Information provided to expectant parents
- Feedback suggestions for parents' birth experiences
- Ongoing engagement with community groups and stakeholders

7. Actions 1355

Expected Outcomes

- Commitment to ongoing monitoring of impacts on residents and maternity service users.
- Focus on partnership working