

## **Priority Setting Partnership publish 11 key research questions to reduce the number of stillbirths**

New research led by Dr Alex Heazell, Honorary Consultant in Obstetrics, Saint Mary's Hospital, which brought together doctors, midwives, parents, third sector organisations, funders and pathologists under the Stillbirth Priority Settings Partnership, has identified 11 key priorities for research into the reduction of stillbirth and improving care for parents who have experienced a stillbirth.

For the first time, people directly affected by stillbirth have had the chance to provide their opinion in setting research priorities. The findings have been published today (2<sup>nd</sup> December) in the *Ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynecology* journal, which validates the importance of these priorities to the clinical and research communities.

The Stillbirth Priority Setting Partnership was co-ordinated by Dr Alex Heazell, with the support of the James Lind Alliance and funding from Tommy's the baby charity, for which Dr Heazell is the Clinical Director of the Manchester Centre. The aim of the partnership is to ensure that future stillbirth research brings the greatest possible benefit to people who are affected by stillbirth, both parents and medical staff, by identifying which unanswered questions are of the greatest importance to them.

The gathering of information took over 18 months to complete with 574 people submitting a total of 1272 questions, which were refined down to 48 questions of the highest ranking questions using a scoring criteria. These questions were then included in a final prioritisation questionnaire which was completed by 1118 respondents. The final stage of the process saw the 25 shortlisted questions put to the expert steering group, to make a final decision on what the top-10 research priorities should be.

In the end, the steering group chose a list of 11 priorities which included an emphasis on the content and delivery of health services, including optimal bereavement care, maternity care in subsequent pregnancies, and the role of mothers in responding to symptoms and signs relating to impending stillbirth. A summary document including the 11 questions can be found here [www.stillbirthpsp.org.uk](http://www.stillbirthpsp.org.uk).

Dr Alex Heazell, who is also a Senior Clinical Lecturer in Obstetrics at The University of Manchester, explains: "Research has an important role to play in the reduction of stillbirths. Our work has involved patients, clinicians, charity and other key stakeholders identifying priorities which has resulted in patient-centered work research priorities.

"We hope that the questions that we identified will shape the stillbirth research agenda and act as a catalyst for future research and funding."

## **Note to Editors**

### **For further information contact:**

Lucy Prosser, Communications Specialist  
Research and Innovation Division, Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS  
Foundation Trust.

Tel: +44(0) 161 701 0260; e-mail: [lucy.prosser@cmft.nhs.uk](mailto:lucy.prosser@cmft.nhs.uk)

Web: [www.research.cmft.nhs.uk](http://www.research.cmft.nhs.uk)

Twitter: @CMFT\_Research

### **Article:**

Research priorities for stillbirth: process overview and results from UK Stillbirth  
Priority Setting Partnership

***Ultrasound in Obstetrics & Gynecology***, Published, 02/12/15

### **Follow link for full article:**

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/uog.15738/abstract>