

From the Chief Executive and Registrar



Henry Charles  
HM Assistant Coroner for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton



10 March 2026

Dear Sir

**Regulation 28 Prevention of Future Deaths report dated 15 January 2026 in relation to Matilda Gwen Pomfret-Thomas**

I would like to begin by offering my heartfelt condolences to the family of Matilda for their tragic loss.

Your report identifies two specific areas where you consider action is necessary in respect of the role of doulas and the support they provide through pregnancy, labour and after the birth of a baby. As Chief Executive and Registrar of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), I take the matters of concern set out in your report very seriously, whilst recognising that some of the issues raised sit outside our remit.

Our vision is to provide safe and effective midwifery education and practice across the four countries of the UK. I set out below the steps we will be taking, and have already taken, to the address some of the issues in relation to the relationship between midwifery professionals and doulas (or other 'unregulated professionals') highlighted by your investigation.

**Actions arising from your report**

- 1. There was evidence given at the inquest by experienced midwifery professionals highlighting that provision of guidance would be helpful for all involved with a birth at which a doula was present.**

Our role is to protect the public and maintain confidence in the nursing and midwifery professions. We support midwives to deliver safe and effective midwifery care through our regulatory processes. We do this by setting the standards of conduct and performance through the [Code](#) and competencies through the [standards of proficiency for midwives](#), which specify the knowledge, understanding and skills that midwives must demonstrate at the point of qualification and after registration, when caring for women, newborn infants, partners and families throughout the maternity journey and across all care settings.

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We're the independent regulator for nurses and midwives in the UK, and nursing associates in England. Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery practice that improves everyone's health and wellbeing.

Registered charity in England and Wales (1091434) and in Scotland (SC038362)

Doulas are not a regulated profession and do not fall within the remit of the Nursing and Midwifery Council. We therefore cannot set standards of training or produce guidance on the role of doulas and other unregistered birth workers. However, as the regulator of midwives we will continue working with others to provide information which supports both the public's and professionals' understanding of these different roles and the standards of care people should expect from registered midwives.

### **Action taken to support the role of midwives**

Through our regulation of midwifery professionals, and our ongoing relationships with senior midwifery professionals across the four nations of the United Kingdom, we have already identified some of the issues that may arise where women choose to engage the services of unregulated birth support professionals, instead of or in addition to registered midwives.

In August 2025, we launched our "*Principles for supporting women's choices in maternity care*" webinar, with supporting frequently asked questions from our launch webinar factsheet. This all sets out a series of principles that have been developed to support midwives and organisations providing personalised care for women during pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period, wherever the care takes place. We have addressed the following points:

- Doulas are not regulated practitioners
- Doulas and other birth workers may have a range of names and titles, such as 'birthkeeper', 'birthworker', and 'mother's helper', for example. In addition, some may have formerly practised as midwives but are no longer registered.
- The role of doulas and other non-registered birth workers is to provide psychological and social support but they are not there to provide midwifery care and advice which is the role of a registered midwife.

The NMC has also worked with Doula UK to launch a video resource intended to clarify the distinct roles that midwives and doulas play for women and families, in addition to setting out how the professions can work together to support positive maternity experiences. The maternity principles and video are available at: <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/guidance/principles-for-supporting-womens-choices-in-maternity-care/>.

### **2. The issues of doula registration, regulation and training are therefore points of concern I would commend for review.**

We are not taking any action in respect of the issue of doula registration, regulation and training as this is beyond the remit of the Nursing and Midwifery Council and is a matter for government policy.

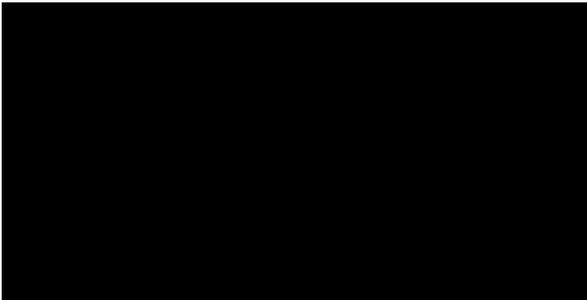
Where we receive evidence of any concerns that may be relevant to public safety, we may decide to refer matters to the police or other appropriate authorities for further investigation, particularly where there is evidence of a poor outcome. We will raise this report at the next meeting of the Maternity Regulation Oversight Group (MROG), an internal group that meets regularly to oversee our regulatory response to concerns raised. The next meeting is on 11 March.

**Conclusion**

Thank you for sharing the areas of concern that you have identified, during your investigations, with us. I hope my setting out of our responses with respect of each concern has been helpful.

Once again, I would like to offer my condolences to Matilda’s family for their tragic loss.

Yours faithfully



Chief Executive and Registrar