

# Key themes from Stakeholder discussion groups, 'Born into Care' events

Following the presentation of the rates of infant removal in England at our Born into Care event on 9th October 2018, stakeholders were asked to move into discussion groups to consider the data presented. The key themes from the discussion are summarised here.

## What is your reaction to the data presented?

Very surprised by the volume of 'non-recurrent' babies

Very interested in both regional variation and local authorities who were 'outliers'

Mixed response to the proportion of proceedings issued within 7 days of birth

## Why do you think there is an increase in state intervention at birth nationally?

### 1. The impact of cultures of practice within individual local authorities

Models of practice

Social workers - training, support, supervision

The impact of individual managers and judges

Workloads and time for direct work and building relationships with families

Different timing and models for pre-birth work

Varying thresholds

### 2. The impact of current national context

Population demographics BME communities, asylum-seeking families, age profile, prison population etc.

Levels of deprivation

Austerity and impact on cutting back of services - primary health services/early intervention services/universal services

## How might you account for regional variation?

The role of the Court

Specific practices or court directives will have an impact e.g. use of care orders at home, use of s.20



Austerity and deprivation are likely to be at the heart of regional variation

## We need a better understanding of:

The similarities and differences between families who experience state intervention at birth in different local authorities/regions

The role of intervention in diversion - what works in intervention in peri-natal space?

The impact of Serious Case Reviews are on state intervention at birth

Factors driving decision making in outlier local authorities

The use of s20 at birth across the country

Longitudinal outcomes for infants where there has been state intervention at birth

How new models of practice e.g. signs of safety have impacted on state intervention at birth

The use of parent and baby assessment units or parent/baby foster placements in different areas across the country

## What is the relationship between:

Infant removal at birth and indices of deprivation?



Infant removal at birth and local authority Ofsted ratings?



Infant removal at birth and local authority spend on early help?



## Recommendations:

- More research to answer the underlying questions
- Showcasing good practice examples
- Enabling local areas to examine and query own data - role for LFJBs?
- Collating evidence around interventions in peri-natal period
- More post removal work with families to reduce recurrent proceedings
- Need for national guidance and improved local guidance re pre-birth assessment and removal at birth practices

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