Sussex Maternity

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Yet another maternity inquiry [*review]* is underway chaired by Donna Okenden. This time it is into the deaths of multiple babies and reports of poor care at the University of Sussex hospital in Worthing, Bereaved parents want the truth, to which they are entitled, their lawyers claim.

One has to ask why the parents of those harmed had to press for an independent review.

The BMJ want the terms of reference extended to review the care of marginalised groups such as non-white and non-British parents.

Over 1000 cases of still birth, neonatal death, maternal death and neonatal brain injury will be examined.

The findings will no doubt mirror those of the other maternity inquiries. Six or is it more?.

We know what is wrong with the maternity services so why doesn't the NHS just get on and deal with it? Trouble is the solution lies in part in increased staffing and in NHS at present there is little if any financial flexibility.

'Get the books balanced' is driving Board agendas.

The NHS could make a big switch into maternity care from other services, and perhaps they should?

But, this will be politically noisy, to say the least, and result in missing other priorities. By all accounts NHS England have tried to take the initiate but

have been blocked by multiple independent inquiries set up by ministers.

One has to ask why the parents of those harmed had to press for an independent review.

Did they not have confidence in the Sussex Trust to be honest with them about what had happened when things did not go as planned.

Interestingly the patient groups did not have trust in CQC to review this service.

What role did lawyers play in all of this?

Was the Trust's reticence to be open based on the advice of their lawyers.

Will the review ask to see this advice? Was NHS Resolution involved?

Remember, always, that turning patients and their relatives into the enemy never works in the long run.

There is a deep malaise in the NHS. Managers are trapped in a financial quagmire, with lots of top priorities and impossible choices.

Ministers and the department of Health is once more focused on reorganising the NHS once again and in the process concentrating power in the DHSC.

Time for really serious reflection by those who care for the future of the NHS.
