

# The Together Project: Understanding and improving support for parents with learning disabilities



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## Introduction:

- Women with learning disabilities report a less positive experience of maternity care, experience poorer pregnancy outcomes, and are more likely to have their children removed from their care;
- Midwives report feeling unsupported in delivering good maternity care to people with learning disabilities;
- **Aim of Together Project:** To develop resources to support the workforce in delivering good maternity care to parents with learning disabilities.

## Design & Methods

A two-phase mixed-methods study.

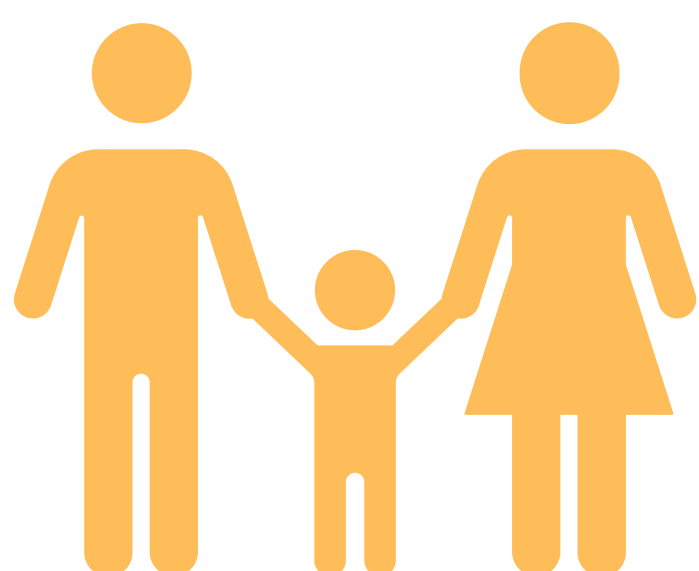
Phase 1: 16 key stakeholders (parents with learning disabilities, their carers & health and social care professionals) were interviewed regarding their experience of maternity care.

Phase 2: Guidelines and resources were co-developed/piloted to support delivery of good maternity care to parents with learning disabilities. 20 health care professionals took part in focus groups/online survey.



## Results:

- Key stakeholder interviews highlighted that parents with learning disabilities can 'slip through the net'. Maternity professionals need support to identify parents with learning disabilities and to deliver equitable and accessible preparation for parenthood.
- Building on the interviews, we co-produced guidelines, a Toolkit for professionals and a Maternity Passport for parents with learning disabilities. These are free and accessible for use: <https://www.surrey.ac.uk/research-projects/together-project-supporting-delivery-good-practice-maternity-services-parents-learning-disabilities>



## Impact:

This study provides evidence- and values-based resources for maternity services, co-produced with people with learning disabilities.

Our next step is to explore acceptability and perceived impact of these resources in maternity services.