

Hospital in baby deaths probe told to submit years of records

Daily Mail Reporter

A HOSPITAL trust at the centre of a maternity deaths inquiry has been asked to hand over hundreds of records to the NHS watchdog.

The Shrewsbury and Telford hospitals has been asked to provide details of all stillbirths, deaths and incidents of significant harm over two decades.

They will be examined by NHS Improvement, the hospital regulator, which is looking into more than 100 cases of alleged poor care.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said: 'The investigation can range as wide as needed to make sure that we get to the bottom of what happened, that families can find out what happened, and that we can learn the lessons from it.

'We've got to get to the truth.'

The review by NHS Improvement was launched last April by former Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt.

Initially it was examining just 23 cases but dozens of other families have come forward to raise concerns.

Some say they were pressured into having natural births without the use of

NEW MATERNITY DEATHS SCANDAL

From the Mail, August 31

caesarean sections or forceps, which led to their babies dying or suffering serious harm. Others claim that their newborns died after midwives missed common infections that could have been treated with antibiotics.

Earlier this month, the Care Quality Commission took enforcement action against the trust after inspectors found serious problems in the maternity unit as well as the A&E unit.

The watchdog has told the trust to make immediate improvements and if it doesn't, wards and departments could be forcibly closed or restricted.

Approximately 5,000 women a year give birth in the main maternity department and five smaller midwife-led units run by Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust.

A damning report in July, carried out by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, found the units were severely understaffed, with five midwives off sick each day on average.

It also warned of a reluctance among managers to investigate errors or learn from their mistakes.

The ongoing review into cases of alleged poor care between 1998 and 2017 is being carried out by senior independent midwife Donna Ockenden and overseen by NHS Improvement.