Tackling racial disparities in maternity care

How to better understand and tackle racial disparities in women’s obstetric and gynaecology care.

WORDS BY ROYAL COLLEGE OF OBSTETRICIANS AND GYNAECOLOGISTS’ (RCOG) RACE EQUALITY TASKFORCE IN A JOINT CAMPAIGN CREATED WITH FIVE X MORE
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These steps have been created by FiveXMore in partnership with the RCOG’s Race Equality Taskforce, whose members include doctors, midwives, policy makers and service users, to better understand and tackle racial disparities in women’s healthcare and racism within the obstetric and gynaecology workforce.

► Go to fivexmore.com to read the steps in full and find out more about support for black women patients. #fivexmore

FIVE STEPS FOR HCPs

1. LISTEN
   If a pregnant woman expresses concern, feels like something is not quite right or is in pain, take time to listen to her concerns and anxieties without making assumptions or presumptions.

2. REMOVE ANY BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION
   Use translation services if required and remember that your body language and tone are vital in helping women to feel at ease.

3. CHECK YOU ARE PROVIDING CLEAR INFORMATION
   After you have explained a woman’s options and made recommendations about her care, it is important that you recap or ask her to recap the information and check she understands the choices available to her.

4. PROVIDE ACCESS TO DETAILED DOCUMENTATION
   Support continuity of care by accurately recording any action, treatment or medication you recommend or prescribe, a woman’s response to treatment, if she has declined any interventions and why.

5. BE A CHAMPION
   Inspire others by championing positive change in your maternity or obstetric unit.