

## Summary of the changes from 2019 to 2026 revision of Perinatal Management of Extreme Preterm Birth Before 27 Weeks of Gestation Framework

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| <b>Executive summary</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides clarity that decisions for survival or comfort focused care should not be based on gestational age alone, but on assessment of the baby's risk profile and prognosis, taking into account multiple factors.</li> <li>Replaces the term risk category with risk profile in this section and throughout the framework to reflect the more nuanced nature of the assessment.</li> <li>Provides clarity that survival focused care should not be offered for babies born before 22 weeks gestation.</li> <li>Places a strong emphasis on the need for joint obstetric, maternity, neonatal counselling.</li> <li>Contains a new section on Implications for Transport/LNU/ SCU recommending that it would usually not be appropriate to retrieve and transfer a baby born before 22 weeks in a maternity unit without a co-located NICU.</li> <li>Emphasises that there should be well documented communication between referring, receiving and transfer centres in decision making where applicable.</li> <li>Emphasises that management should be regularly reviewed before and after birth as plans may be reconsidered if the risk of baby changes or if parental wishes change.</li> <li>Has amended wording for infants assessed as moderate risk. Whilst survival focused care should be provided initially, decisions may change depending on the ongoing response to treatment and complications and discussion with parents.</li> <li>Clarifies the main goals of survival focused and comfort care for the mother and baby.</li> <li>Highlights the updated references, inclusion of recent data, other relevant BAPM frameworks, and a new section of audit and research recommendations.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Remit</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarifies that the legal basis and termination of pregnancy including definitions of "viability" are out of the scope of this framework. However, emphasises the importance that options of pregnancy should have been discussed.</li> <li>References updated BAPM frameworks including 'Recognising uncertainty: an integrated framework for palliative care in perinatal medicine'</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Definitions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides clarification of the use of the term "woman" prior to the birth of baby and "mother" postnatally</li> <li>Defines perinatal teams</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Risk-based approach to decision making</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasises assessment of risk profile based on multiple factors and parents wishes</li> <li>Includes the most recent literature from the UK in terms of survival focused care and survival to neonatal discharge and two year outcomes.</li> <li>Provides further detail with references on chorioamnionitis, preterm prelabour rupture of membranes (PPROM) and multiple birth; these are now distinct bullet points.</li> <li>Wording emphasising the importance of chorioamnionitis and PPRM have been included under the visual tool in Figure 1.</li> <li>Box 1 includes more examples of the different risk profiles.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Counselling parents and decision-making</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Figure 2 flow chart wording amended for more clarity including "<i>Extremely high risk – comfort focused care <u>should be provided</u>, <u>Explain management plan to parents</u></i>"</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Obstetric management focused on maternal wellbeing and neonatal survival</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

**Perinatal Management of Extreme Preterm Birth Before 27 Weeks of Gestation**  
**Summary of the changes from 2019 to 2026 revision**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of recent national documents such as Saving Babies care bundle and BAPM perinatal optimisation passport and toolkit</li> <li>• Emphasis on transfer at the earliest opportunity in utero for threatened preterm labour.</li> <li>• Emphasis on the importance of communication between referring unit, transport team and receiving tertiary NICU through conference calling modalities.</li> <li>• More emphasis that a decision to transfer antenatally does not necessarily commit management to survival focused care and assessment of risk should be an ongoing assessment and reviewed when birth is imminent.</li> <li>• Emphasis that decisions around mode of birth should also be reviewed to ensure appropriate balance of risks and benefits for the woman and baby.</li> <li>• Antenatal steroids- clarity that it would not be appropriate to provide antenatal steroids (or antenatal transfer) prior to 22 weeks gestation since the risk for the infant even if steroids (and transfer) are provided would be extremely high. As a general principle, it would be appropriate to provide antenatal steroids if an infant is anticipated to be high (or moderate) risk if they deliver in the next 48 hours, <u>and</u> parents would wish for survival focused care to be provided in such a scenario.</li> <li>• New bullet points on Maternal intrapartum antibiotic prophylaxis to reduce the risk of neonatal group B streptococcal disease</li> <li>• Emphasis that assessment of whether fetal heart is present before birth is helpful to the neonatal attending team</li> <li>• Mode of birth: included potential indications and risks of induction of labour, and the importance of discussion of options with the woman.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Neonatal management</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More structured section covering management at birth. Importantly, if the baby's heart rate and general condition are not improved by active stabilisation efforts such as intubation and ventilation, then it may be necessary to inform the parents of the change in clinical situation and of a need to move to a comfort care approach. Refers to appendices with example scenarios and situations of uncertainty or conflict.</li> <li>• Emphasis on the importance of providing the opportunity, if appropriate, for parents to see, touch, cuddle and photograph their baby</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>New section: Implications of this framework for Transport/LNU and SCU teams</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis that infants born in maternity units without co-located NICU are at extremely high risk of poor outcome and would usually not be appropriate to transfer ex-utero. However, multiple factors including parental wishes influence decision making, which should ideally involve multiple teams using conference call modalities.</li> <li>• Transport teams should be dispatched promptly after extreme preterm births outside of a hospital with a NICU. Teams should have an optimum composition with a suitably experienced and senior team lead.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Implementation of framework</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signposts to Appendix 2, example case scenarios and Appendix 3, situations of uncertainty and potential conflicts</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>New section: Recommendations for audit and research</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendation that all units who care for extreme preterm infants, to participate in national audit and research. In particular, neonatal units should contribute to studies specifically focused on babies born at 22 weeks given the small number of babies per unit and benefit of collaboration to address uncertainties.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Appendix 1: Outcomes and data</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated with the most recent UK data on survival focused care, survival to neonatal discharge and two-year developmental outcomes, and a summary of international</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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| published literature. These are presented in tables rather than graphs to avoid direct comparisons given the differences in population and inclusion criteria.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Appendix 2 Example case scenarios</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes more examples of common scenarios in a structured format. Includes counselling of infants with different risk profiles, in NICU and non-NICU settings, and different parent wishes, along with the recommended considerations and actions</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Appendix 3 Situations of uncertainty and potential conflict</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes more situations of uncertainty and potential conflict in a structured format, along with the recommended considerations and actions</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Appendix 5: Replaced parent information and infographic to “Lay summary”</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <p>Based on parent feedback, the 2019 infographics have been updated with the latest outcome data and are included for professional use: a detailed 22–26-week version with three outcome columns (page 32); a simpler two-column version for 22–26 weeks (page 33); and a visual version focused on 22–23 weeks (page 34). The infographics are intended for professional use and are not recommended as parent information leaflets or for counselling.</p> <p>We are also co-developing resources with parents specifically to support counselling, which will be shared when available.</p> <p>Appendix 5 has been replaced with a lay summary of decision-making and the latest outcome figures</p> |