19 June 2014

*HSCIC must be quoted as the source of these figures*

*Regional figures are available*

**Prevalence of mothers smoking whilst pregnant is lowest on record**

New figures from the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) show the prevalence of women giving birth who classed themselves as smokers at the time was 12 per cent, the lowest it has been in eight years of data collection.

Today's report shows the prevalence of women who classed themselves as smokers whilst pregnant fell to 12.0 per cent (75,910 out of 632,960 maternities) from 12.7 per cent (83,490 out of 658,110 maternities) in the previous year, and this continues the steady decline from 2006-07 when this was 15.1 per cent.

Since 2006-07 the number of women who smoked whilst pregnant fell by 16 per cent (from 90,890) but overall maternities increased by 5 per cent (from 601,260).

Despite a continuous decline in the prevalence of pregnant smokers, the published national ambition to reduce rates of smoking throughout pregnancy to 11 per cent or less by the end of 2015 has not yet been reached, however over one third of Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are currently achieving this (39 per cent or 82 out of 211).

*Statistics on Women's Smoking Status at Time of Delivery* is a quarterly report for the period January 2014 to March 2014 which also gives an annual picture that can be compared with data going back to 2006-07.

In the 12 months to March 2014 in England:

- There was wide regional variation in women who smoked during pregnancy, with the highest prevalence in the Durham, Darlington and Tees Area Team (20.6 per cent) and the lowest prevalence in the London Area Team (5.1 per cent).
- At CCG level NHS Blackpool had the highest prevalence where more than one in four mothers smoked during pregnancy (27.5 per cent) and both NHS Central London (Westminster) and NHS Richmond had the lowest prevalence (1.9 per cent).
- Almost one in twelve CCGs (18 of the 211 CCGs) recorded a prevalence of at least one fifth of women smoking during pregnancy.
- Of the four Commissioning Regions, London had the highest proportion of CCGs that are meeting the national ambition (97 per cent of 32 CCGs), followed by CCGs in the South of England (52 per cent out of 50 CCGs) and those in the Midlands and East of England (26 per cent of 61 CCGs). The North of England had the lowest proportion of CCGs that are meeting the national ambition (13 per cent of 68 CCGs).
HSCIC Chair Kingsley Manning said: “It is encouraging to see that since 2006-07 the number of pregnant women who smoked during pregnancy has declined. However, there is still a little way to go to achieve the national ambition.

“Today’s figures highlight there is a still work to be done and it is fundamental that mothers-to-be are aware of the damaging effects smoking can have on their baby.”

You can read the full report at http://www.hscic.gov.uk/pubs/wsstd1314q4

Chart 1 - Prevalence of women giving birth who classed themselves as smokers at the time in England, 2006/07 to 2013/14

Notes to editors

1. The Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) was established on April 1 2013 as an Executive Non Departmental Public Body (ENDPB). It is England’s trusted data source, delivering high quality information and IT systems to drive better patient services, care and outcomes. Its work includes publishing more than 220 statistical publications annually; providing a range of specialist data services; managing informatics projects and programmes and developing and assuring national systems against appropriate contractual, clinical safety and information standards.
2. This report supplements the national information available from the five yearly Infant Feeding Survey. The IFS however gives the prevalence of pregnant women in England who smoked during their pregnancy or the year before it, and therefore differs from what is published here.

3. Activity figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

4. Number of maternities is defined as the number of pregnant women who give birth to one or more live or stillborn babies of at least 24 weeks gestation, where the baby is delivered by either a midwife or doctor at home or in an NHS hospital (including GP units). This count is the number of pregnant women, not the number of babies (deliveries). It does not include maternities that occur in psychiatric hospitals or private beds/hospitals.

5. ‘Smoking whilst pregnant’ is defined in this context as women who reported that they were smokers at the time of giving birth.

6. Reducing smoking during pregnancy is one of the three national ambitions in the Tobacco Control Plan and more information on this can be found in at Healthy Lives, Healthy People: a tobacco control plan for England. The Department of Health 2011. This is available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-tobacco-control-plan-for-england

7. National level comparisons have not been made with years prior to 2006-07 due to concerns over data quality in years prior to that.

8. Figures are based on the location of the GP practice the mother is registered with.

9. For media enquiries please contact media@hscic.gov.uk or 0845 257 6990.