



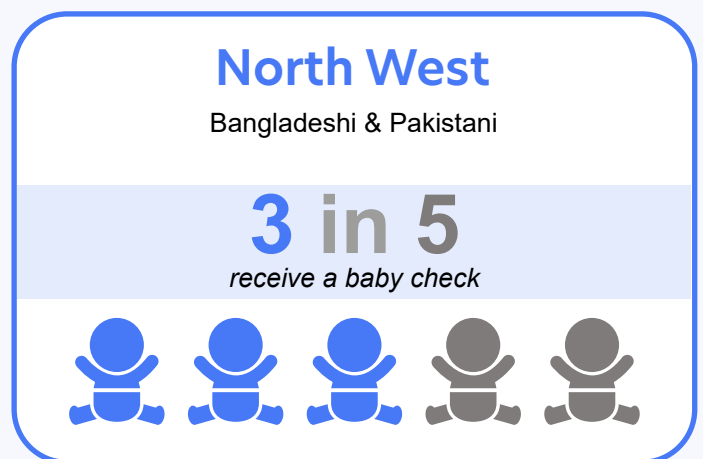
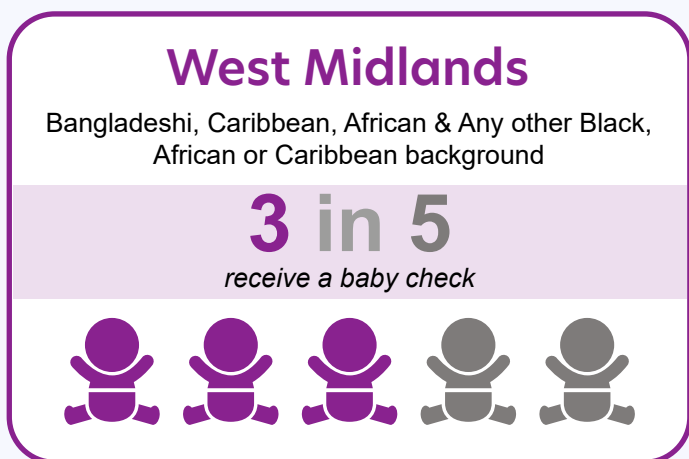
# Ethnic inequities in 6-8 week baby checks in England

6-8 week baby checks should be accessible to all infants in England. We used the GP records of approx. 1.2 million infants 2006-2021 to compare coverage (the proportion of babies who had received a 6-8 baby check) in different ethnic groups.

## Summary of findings

- There is inequitable baby check coverage between ethnic groups in different regions of England
- **Unequal coverage has persisted into recent years, particularly for the Bangladeshi and Caribbean ethnic groups in the West Midlands and the Bangladeshi ethnic group in the North West**
- Baby check coverage was highest in those who received at least one dose of their 8 week infant vaccinations, and those whose mothers had received a 6-8 week maternal check

## In England, 4 in 5 babies receive a baby check



## Recommendations for policy and practice

**Urgent and coordinated action is needed from integrated commissioning boards, primary care networks and GP practices** to investigate the reasons behind these inequities, and to **work together with local communities** to make sure that preventive care provision after birth is meeting the needs of babies, mothers and families. Some considerations include:



Has the purpose of each 6-8 week preventive care service (baby checks, maternal checks, health visitor reviews, infant vaccinations) been clearly explained to parents/caregivers?



Have language, cultural, religious and gender preferences been considered when providing information and delivering services? What about health literacy and digital access?



Is the stressful early infancy period the best time to start providing information about these services? Can we start giving information during pregnancy?



How can we build trust between families and health services, and support informed decision-making?



Do certain service delivery models (e.g. joint/longer appointments, dedicated maternal & child health clinics) improve access to 6-8 week services for some ethnic groups?



How can we co-design solutions with the ethnic communities most affected by inequities?

