

The RCOG and FSRH General Election Manifesto, 2017

We want to see the next Government take a life course approach to improve the health of all women and girls at every age and stage of their lives. The next Government needs to invest now and place women at the centre of their own care, educating and empowering them to make informed choices.

We want all the parties to commit to:

Patient Safety

- Implementing the National Maternity Review, making maternity services safer, kinder and more family-friendly.
- Joining up and improving family planning services, including investing in training for contraception and abortion care.
- Supporting the RCOG's [Each Baby Counts](#) programme which is committed to reducing the number of stillbirths, early neonatal deaths and babies suffering severe brain injury at term by 50% by 2020.
- Ensuring that specialist perinatal mental health services are available to all women. Maternal suicides are now the leading cause of direct maternal deaths occurring within a year after the end of pregnancy, and the rate sadly remains unchanged [since 2003](#).
- Protecting women's access to safe abortion care without fear of harassment and/or intimidation. The commissioning of services for women with complex medical needs at regional centres requires serious thought and urgent implementation.
- Introducing folic acid fortification in flour as an evidence-based intervention reducing the number of neural tube defects in babies.

Public Health

- Ensuring age-appropriate sex and relationships education (SRE) is made compulsory in all schools and colleges, including academies and free schools, by September 2019.
- Protecting public health budgets allocated to local authorities to ensure that women have easy access to contraceptive advice and the full range of contraceptive services, including both long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) and emergency contraception, to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections.
- Tackling the present obesity epidemic by strengthening the current Childhood Obesity Plan and introducing public information programmes. Government should take the lead on restricting the use of industrially produced trans fatty acids in food, and stronger regulation in the promotion and sale of foods high in salt, sugar and fat.

NHS Staff

- Recognising the contribution and dedication of hard working NHS staff, and supporting the Five Year Forward View's aim to improve the health and wellbeing of NHS staff by 5% by 2020.

International Aid

- Honouring the pledge to spend 0.7% of GDP on aid. The UK has committed to supporting the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG5), which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. The UK also has a duty to support fragile states and humanitarian crises. RCOG programmes like [Leading Safe Choices](#) demonstrate that focussed interventions in women's health can improve the health status of women and girls in developing countries.

For more information on the manifesto, please contact policy@rcog.org.uk