**Thank you so much for spreading the Make Birth Better message.**

**You can either please print out this letter or use the copy and send it to your local Member of Parliament (MP).**

**Look up your local MP:** [**https://members.parliament.uk/**](https://members.parliament.uk/)

[Insert your address and date here]

Dear [insert name]

I am a passionate supporter of the Make Birth Better campaign. We are a unique collective of parents and professionals across the UK dedicated to reducing the life-changing impact of birth trauma through campaigning, research and training.

A significant proportion (24%) of women report an element of their birth as traumatic, and around 20% of women in the UK go on to develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (Czarnocka and Slade, 2000).

 This trauma can result in immediate and long-term consequences for mother and baby (Fenech & Thomson, 2014). Furthermore, despite obstetric claims representing only 10% (1,067) of clinical negligence claims by number, they accounted for 48% of the total value of new claims reported (CNST, 2018). Therefore, there are substantial wellbeing and financial implications attributed to a traumatic birth.

To understand better women’s experience of access to support for a traumatic birth, we recently carried out a survey with parents and professionals ([www.makebirthbetter.org/circleoftrauma](http://www.makebirthbetter.org/circleoftrauma)). Results indicated that most women are still not being asked about their birth experience. What’s more, only 25% of women felt they received the right help after seeking support for their birth trauma. Early intervention is essential to ensure women and their partners can access local specialist support rapidly. However, this relies on staff being able to identify birth trauma and signpost them to the most appropriate services. Results from our survey identified that healthcare professionals often feel ill prepared to assess for birth trauma, or to know how, or where to refer women for specialist trauma treatment.  In fact, 73% of them had never had any specific training on birth trauma.

A significant portion of psychological birth trauma can be prevented, and at Make Birth Better we believe one way to do this is ensuring all maternity services are trauma informed. Although anyone can experience their birth as traumatic, some women are at higher risk. By ensuring maternity services adopt a trauma informed approach, this would assist in the detection of any women at risk of experiencing their birth as potentially traumatic, and adequately supporting her throughout the maternity journey. Therefore, training staff about the prevention, detection, and treatment of birth trauma is essential.

As part of our campaign we would love you to respond to these specific questions:

1. What is in place locally to address these issues?
2. Whether there are specific birth trauma pathways in place for the prevention, identification and treatment of birth trauma?
3. Whether all staff receive mandatory training specifically on birth trauma?

I look forward to hearing more about vital service provision in this area and thank you for taking the time to listen to our concerns.

Yours sincerely,

[insert name]

**What Next**

**When you hear back from your MP, we would love to hear about the response to the questions raised, and which Trust it relates to. We hope to collate this evidence across England, to support the lobbying work we are doing to try and push for all maternity services to become trauma informed, and that staff receive the training they need to support women/partners throughout their maternity journey. Updates on this work will be published in our newsletter. We appreciate the time you are taking to support this work, and the campaign could not achieve the results it does without your support.**

**If you have any questions at all, please don’t hesitate to contact us on** **hello@makebirthbetter.org**