

April 2011

*1) Do the trust's hospitals routinely offer ultrasound scans to determine the sex of unborn babies?*

No, the ultrasound department does not offer routine scans to determine fetal gender. An anomaly scan is offered and performed between 18 weeks and 20 weeks 6 days. This is a screening service and is to determine fetal abnormalities.

If the parents request at this scan that they wish to know the sex of the baby, then the Sonographer will look and give their opinion. However, it is made clear to the parents that this is not always 100% accurate.

*2) If not, please explain the reason why.*

Screening for fetal gender is not available under the auspices of the NHS.

*3) If not, please state whether the risk that expectant parents from some ethnic groups may choose to abort female babies contributed to the decision to withdraw routine gender scanning. If this was the case, please give details.*

*Please send me details of any emails, letters, policy documents or minutes to meetings relating to the trust's policy on ultrasound scanning to determine the sex of a baby.*

Abortion based on gender alone in the absence of any abnormality is not legal or permissible. As detailed above scanning for gender is not provided at all at this hospital and therefore we have no policy or other documents to disclose in response to your question.