

Maternity Project Community of Practice (MPCoP) News

Newsletter 4 – March 2010

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What's new?

Publicly funded homebirths

Publicly funded homebirth pilots at Casey and Sunshine Hospitals were announced by Health Minister Daniel Andrews in December 2009, following consultation with consumer groups, maternity health professionals, obstetricians and midwives. Each pilot will provide maternity care to approximately 50 women over a 12 month period, providing more maternity care options for families. Once the public homebirth program has been evaluated, it may be more widely offered through the public health system. Sunshine Hospital's homebirthing pilot has recently announced its first homebirth a success.

Contact: Melissa.brown@health.vic.gov.au

Whats on?

Rural Maternity Forum Ballarat

Wednesday 21st April

Full day Free of charge

This is an opportunity to share information and to hear of the successes and strategies from the field. Whilst the focus is on rural maternity many of the presentations relate to maternity care generally and would be beneficial for all clinicians

Themes:

- Translating Maternity Policy into Practice
 - Safety and Quality in maternity care
 - Workforce
 - Service Delivery and Sustainability
- Contact Joan O'Neill
joan.oneill@health.vic.gov.au to register your interest

3rd Biennial Breathing New Life into Maternity Care: multidisciplinary conference

(Australian College of Midwives in conjunction with Royal Australian College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine)

1-3 July 2010

Alice Springs, NT

For more information:

www.breathingnewlife.remark.com.au



2010 MPCoP meetings:

- **Tues 3rd August**
9.30-11.30 am
Royal Women's Hospital
- **Wed 10th Nov**
9.30-11.30am
Royal Women's Hospital



What's going on in the Department?

Maternity Services Program

Common Assessment Tool

As part of the Maternity Workforce Initiative, the Department funded 12 innovative projects that demonstrated innovation in maternity workforce redesign. One of these projects was a collaboration between Eastern Health (on behalf of metropolitan maternity managers) and Midwifery Academics Victoria (MIDAC) to develop a common clinical assessment tool for midwifery students. An important aim of this project was to enhance the capacity of health services to manage an increased number of clinical placements through a streamlined generic assessment process. Representatives from rural, regional and metropolitan health services and all university providers of midwifery education in Victoria participated in developing this tool.

Evaluation of the pilot is underway and preliminary findings indicate that the potential introduction of a common assessment tool in pilot health services has been a positive experience. There are plans for further evaluation of this tool with the potential for statewide implementation later in 2010.

Postnatal Domiciliary Survey

Maternity Services Program is engaged in a project which aims to understand more about the way postnatal care is currently organised and provided by Victorian health services. The project explores operational and funding models for the provision of effective and appropriate publicly funded lactation services in Victoria. This will allow the Maternity Services Program to develop a policy position and determine responsibilities in relation to postnatal care for mothers and babies.

One of the key components of the project is a survey of maternity services. This survey has provided a better understanding of the way postnatal care is currently organised and provided by Victorian health services. The survey is now complete and policy and funding options are being developed.

Contact Melissa.brown@health.vic.gov.au

Rural Maternity Initiative

The Rural Maternity Initiative (RMI) commenced in 2003 to support rural maternity hospitals in the establishment of continuity of midwifery models of care. The RMI was broadened in 2007/08 to include projects and service redesign that supported rural maternity services more broadly. This strategy has contributed to sustainability of local maternity services and has given rural women choice in childbirth options, a principle that underpins the Government's maternity framework - *Future directions for Victoria's maternity service*.

In some rural communities where birthing services are not available, the development of collaborative projects and alliances has enabled the provision of antenatal care, often by midwives, in a woman's own community. This local care has resulted in women being able to access local care with travel only required for their birth. These alliances have also enabled a sharing of resources and an increase in capacity of all hospitals to meet consumer needs and the growth in birth numbers that have occurred in recent times. Collaborative maternity care between hospital midwives and local general practitioners has also been a feature of many of the funded models/projects. Contact Joan O'Neill 90961425 or joan.oneill@health.vic.gov.au for more information

Rural Midwifery Support Program

The Rural Midwifery Support Program (RMSP) aims to enhance midwife capability and build a confident, skilled, contemporary workforce through the appointment of Clinical Midwife Consultants (CMCs) across the state. The key objective of the RMSP is to contribute to sustainability of safe maternity services in rural Victoria through:

- The provision of professional support and mentorship for rural midwives.
- The facilitation of access to education and upskilling for rural midwives based on identified needs.
- Supporting rural and regional health services to undertake a gap analysis related to skill and practice requirements of midwives.
- Supporting health services to develop clinical practice improvement plans.
- The promotion and facilitation of consistent clinical practice and informed by evidence which is consistent across the state.

CMCs will be based in a health service within each rural health region and will work across the designated region. The RMSP will be aligned with the Maternity and Newborn Clinical Network with coordination from the Department of health. Regional program governance will occur through regional working groups chaired by the health service employing the CMC. A statewide steering committee chaired by the department will oversee the program.

It is anticipated that the positions will be advertised in the near future with commencement in April.

Contact: Joan O'Neill 90961425 or joan.oneill@health.vic.gov.au for more information

The National Smoke Free Pregnancy Project

Quit has been funded by the Commonwealth Government to work with and train midwives in smoking intervention and cessation to help encourage and support pregnant women who smoke to quit smoking and to stay smoke free after giving birth.

The training includes:

- health effects of smoking upon the health status of the pregnant women and her unborn baby
- benefits of quitting during pregnancy
- benefit of midwives as caregivers of pregnant women to conduct smoking cessation interventions that are successful
- understanding smoking behaviour
- using the internationally recognised, evidence based 5As framework – Ask, Assess, Advise, Assist/Arrange, Ask Again) for brief intervention

Midwives who have completed Quit's training will increase their knowledge of smoking behaviour, brief intervention and cessation and Quit's services, including the fax referral to the Quitline.

The project has been extended until December 2010 and will continue training and educating midwives, and introducing further sustainability measures, in Melbourne Maternity hospitals and regional Victoria.

Contact: Laura.zarpellon@cancervic.org.au

Maternity project updates:

Victorian Maternity Services Education Program (MSEP)

As a key initiative of the *Future Directions* for Victoria's maternity services, MSEP continues to facilitate multidisciplinary site specific education in primary, secondary and tertiary maternity services. A total of 12 workshops were conducted in 2009 with the majority conducted in rural and regional maternity services. Much interest has been shown to access the program for 2010, particularly from rural and regional services.

During the first half of 2010, MSEP will conduct 5 Pregnancy Care workshops in rural and regional services including Benalla and District Memorial Hospital, Goulburn Valley Health (Shepparton), LaTrobe Regional Hospital (Traralgon), Bendigo Health Group and Western District Health Service (Hamilton). Host Pregnancy Care sites have been selected to promote access for particular regional and rural clinicians.

New resources developed in 2009 include an Asthma in Pregnancy DVD and an online learning package for maternity care clinicians focusing on maternity emergency scenarios

Contact: Bree.Bulle@thewomens.org.au
Caprice.Gellman@thewomens.org.au

Fetal Surveillance Education Program (FSEP)

Following on from a busy 2009, the RANZCOG Fetal Surveillance Education Program (FSEP) has another full year ahead. Current program developments include:

- The "Fetal Surveillance: A Practical Guide" handbook had been successfully published and is selling well throughout Australia and New Zealand. Copies of the book can be purchased through the FSEP office and order forms are available on the FSEP website, http://www.ranzcog.edu.au/fsep/practical_guide.shtml.
- Work on the validation of the FSEP assessment continues to progress well. Results from the test validation process have shown improvements in the reliability and overall quality of the test in assessing the knowledge and educational needs of all participants in the area of fetal surveillance. The preliminary processes involved were accepted for publication in Bio Med Central Medical Education in 2009. [Rasch scaling procedures for informing development of a valid Fetal Surveillance Education Program multiple-choice assessment](#). Nathan Zoanetti, Patrick Griffin, Mark Beaves and Euan M Wallace. BMC Medical Education 2009, 9:20. This article is available from: <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6920/9/20>. Standard setting, the final component of the test validation process will be undertaken mid year.
- The OFSEP (Online Fetal Surveillance Education Program) remains available to all institutions, at no cost, where they engage in our face-to-face education sessions. Discussion is underway regarding a significant upgrade of this component of the program.
- The FSEP continues to deliver high quality, cost effective education throughout Australia and New Zealand, with increasing international interest. This is supported by our most recent publication, [Participant evaluation of the RANZCOG Fetal Surveillance Education Program](#). Annie KROUSHEV, Mark BEAVES, Valerie JENKINS and Euan M. WALLACE. Australian and New Zealand Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology 2009; **49**: 268–273.

For further information please contact:
Sharon Chang on 9412 2958 or
schang@ranzcog.org.au

3Centres Collaboration

3centres is developing a set of guidelines for high risk obstetric care, to improve consistency between tertiary maternity services in Victoria:

1. Pre-eclampsia
2. Antepartum haemorrhage
3. Preterm labour
4. Placenta praevia
5. Preterm rupture of membranes
6. Macrosomia
7. Cervical shortening

The first (Pre-eclampsia) guideline has been completed and will be available on the 3centres website within a couple of months

Contact:

Wendy Cutchie on 0410 417 963 or
wendy.cutchie@thewomens.org.au
www.3centres.com.au

Who are we?

The Maternity Project Community of Practice (MPCoP) is an informal network of professionals who work on a range of projects which support maternity care services throughout Victoria.

The projects are aligned with Future Directions for Victoria's Maternity Services (Future Directions, 2004), which sets a framework for gradual but strategic development of the state's maternity services. The focus of Future Directions (2004) is on women and supports collaborative teamwork between maternity care professionals to provide maternity services which:

- are safe and high quality
- promote primary maternity care with support from and referral to medical expertise when required
- make the best use of complementary professional skills
- enhance a team approach
- provide women with choice

Some projects are directly funded by the Victorian Department of Human Services (Department) and other projects are initiated by individual health services.

For further information about Future Directions see www.health.vic.gov.au/maternitycare

To enquire about the MPCoP contact Catherine.chamberlain@southernhealth.org.au

What do we do?

The MPCoP:

- Publishes this **newsletter** twice a year to provide information about our projects for our colleagues working across maternity care services in Victoria
- **meets 3 times a year** to exchange information, share ideas and learnings, promote synergy between maternity projects, and provide peer support to project staff.
- Facilitates an **annual Twilight Forum**, which may be of interest to the wider maternity service network (see www.3centres.com.au for information on previous presentations.)

How can I join?

Anyone undertaking projects related to maternity care is welcome to join the MPCoP.

Please contact Catherine.chamberlain@southernhealth.org.au if you are interested in joining the group or receiving regular newsletters by email.