

Queensland mums and babies are winners in maternity review, says Maternity Coalition

Recommendations from *Rebirthing: Report of the Review of Maternity Services in Queensland*, released today, signal an historic shift in maternity care policy.

President of Maternity Coalition Queensland branch, Bruce Teakle, said, "This report puts women and their families firmly at the centre of their birth care services, and provides a strong and realistic framework for reform.

"The current emphasis on hospital-based, obstetric led care has led to the current crisis: shortages of obstetricians and midwives, hospitals struggling to meet demand.

"The report shows how a sustainable maternity system can be built around community-based, midwife-led care.

Major recommendations of the report include:

- Community-based pregnancy and post-natal care for urban and rural women
- Access to unbiased information for pregnant women
- Continuity of care – from known caregivers in a team
- Respect for women's choices

Bruce Teakle said:

"This report makes specific recommendations to restore bush birthing services. Currently many women have to leave their communities weeks before the birth of their baby to birth at major centres, causing tremendous personal and family stress."

Bruce Teakle said:

"Queensland lags behind other Australian states in maternity care, but a strong response to this review could leapfrog us ahead. We strongly urge Health Minister Nuttall to move quickly and firmly to begin the implementation process.

"With Queensland's caesarean section rate at 31% and rising, ongoing closure of rural maternity units, and only one per cent of Queensland women able to access best practice one-to-one midwifery care currently, we have a long way to go. However, this report lays out the map of how to get there."

Full report at <http://www.maternityservicesreviewqld.net.au/whatsnew.htm>

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The Maternity Coalition Inc.

Australia's National Maternity Consumer Advocacy Organisation

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