

Media Release

Clinical Excellence Commission

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NSW JOINS NATIONAL PUSH TO REDUCE STILLBIRTHS

NSW has joined a national push to drive down the number of stillbirths with around six babies stillborn in Australia every day.

Today, the Clinical Excellence Commission is holding workshops with NSW maternity staff at Westmead Hospital to highlight some of the five recommended practices to prevent stillbirth in the NSW Safer Baby Program.

NSW Health Senior Clinical Advisor Obstetrics, Prof Michael Nicholl said hospitals across NSW were committed to reducing stillbirths in line with improvements seen internationally. The Safer Baby Program is part of a national collaboration with the Stillbirth Centre for Research Excellence, NSW Health, the Clinical Excellence Commission and partners across Queensland and Victoria.

“We know stopping smoking in pregnancy, awareness and management of decreased fetal movement, maternal side sleeping, detecting and managing fetal growth restriction and carefully timing birth for women with stillbirth risk factors is crucial to getting the stillbirth rate down,” Prof Nicholl said.

“In NSW for every 1000 babies born six will be stillborn, affecting around 12 families each week. We’re focusing on supporting the national goal to reduce preventable stillbirth right across the state.

At today’s Clinical Excellence Commission workshop, health workers from Western and South Western Sydney Local Health Districts will be trained in working with pregnant women to address three of the Program’s five identified risk factors for stillbirth; stopping smoking, side sleeping and being aware of decreased fetal movement.

Western Sydney, South Western Sydney, Hunter New England and Central Coast Local Health Districts have joined as national research partners to reduce stillbirth as they are geographically diverse and have some of the busiest maternity departments in NSW.

Westmead Hospital Women’s and Newborn Health operations director Donna Garland said they were delighted to have experts working with maternity staff to help women enhance their pregnancy outcome.

“Our midwives and maternity service clinicians will actively encourage women to access the Safer Baby Program resources so they are well-informed and can become the decision makers,” Ms Garland said.

The NSW Government’s \$157 million parenting package delivers more midwives and family health nurses across the state; investment in testing and treatments for children’s diseases; and practical and emotional support to parents.

Online resources from the NSW Safer Baby Program are available [here](#).

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