

Fact sheet

Childbirth experience research project survey: participant information

August 2025

You are invited to take part in the research project, **Catching women falling through the gaps: Partnering with women in service redesign to improve birth outcomes and mental health in regional areas.**

This is because you are pregnant or have just given birth and having your care with maternity services in the Mid North Coast Local Health District (MNCLHD).

The purpose of this research is to study childbirth related trauma. The results of the study will contribute to an understanding of:

- How many women who access MNCLHD Maternity Services experience birth trauma
- How can services be developed to support women with birth trauma.

Information for survey participants

What is this research?

The purpose of this research is to study childbirth related trauma.

The objective of this project is to:

1. Identify the number of women in the MNCLHD who are not being offered a birth debrief or referral to alternate service
2. Find out what is valued by women with self-reported Birth Trauma and Postpartum Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
3. Use the research findings to explore future service development

Participating in the research

Participation in this research is voluntary. If you don't wish to take part, you don't have to.

You will receive the best possible care whether or not you take part.

Online survey

You will be contacted by text messaging at 6 to 12 weeks following the birth of your baby inviting you to participate in the research by completing an online survey which will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

If you decide not to participate you can opt out by not completing the online survey.

A reminder text will be sent within 2 weeks of the first, once again you can choose to "opt out" by not replying to the text.

The online survey will ask questions about your health, pregnancy and birth, your childbirth experience and childbirth related trauma and can be completed in your own time. Once you commenced the survey, we would be grateful if you could answer all of the questions in the survey. However, we understand if there are some questions you prefer to leave unanswered.

Interview

At the end of the survey there will be a question advising that if we have further questions, we may want to contact you by email to organise a follow-up interview to talk about your experience and childbirth related trauma. The interview can be face to face or virtual and take 30-60 minutes. The purpose of the interview is to gain a better understanding of how we can improve our postnatal services. If you are interested in being contacted, we will be asking for your name and email address.

Costs

There are no costs associated with participating in this research project, nor will you be paid.

What will happen to information about me?

By participating in the research, you consent to the research team collecting and using personal information about you for the research project.

Any information obtained in connection with this research project that can identify you will remain confidential and will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team.

All information you provide will be stored in a password protected appropriately secure format and held by the MNCLHD for archival purposes. When the information is no longer required for the purposes for which it was collected it is deleted.

It is anticipated that the results of this research project will be published and/or presented in a variety of forums. In any publication and/or presentation, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified. Personal identifiable information, such as name, address, and phone number will not be included in any publications.

What are the risks associated with this research?

There is a risk that you will be inconvenienced by the time spent completing the online survey.

The content of the survey may be sensitive and there is a risk that thinking about the birth events may cause you to become upset or distressed.

Support services

If you have experienced birth related trauma, we encourage you to discuss with your local GP and/or Child and Family Health Nurses (C&FHN).

The following support services are also available:

- PANDA National helpline for families experiencing anxiety and depression during pregnancy and early childhood.
Phone 1300 726 306 Monday-Saturday 0900-1930, or ask a question via email - support@panda.org.au and one of their Helpline team members will return the call.
- Gidget Foundation Australia supports the emotional wellbeing of expectant and new parents.
Website
Phone 1300 851 758 or email contact@gidgethouse.org.au
- Australasian Birth Trauma Association offers a support service for women and their families who have experienced trauma (physical and psychological) resulting from the birthing process, including a free peer 2 peer support program.
- Mental Health Access Line
Phone 1800 011 511 (24/7)
- Lifeline
Phone 13 11 14 (24/7)
- 13 YARN is the first national crisis support line for mob who are feeling overwhelmed or having difficulty coping.
Phone 13 92 76 (24/7)

Providing compliments or concerns to MNCLHD Maternity Services about your experience

MNCLHD Maternity Services would like to hear about your childbirth experience as it provides a great insight to the ways they can improve our services. Ways you can provide feedback:

- Talk to your midwife or doctor about your experience while you are receiving care
- Contact your local maternity service and speak to the Midwifery Unit Manager
- Send a card or letter with your feedback about your experience to our service
- Provide compliments or concerns about your healthcare through the MNCLHD website's contact page
- Provide a complaint or feedback to Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC) - online, or by phone 1800 043 159

What if I would like further information about the study?

If you would like to know more about the study, and your potential involvement, please contact the principal investigator, Frances Guy via email frances.guy@health.nsw.gov.au or phone 02 6691 1946

Ethics approval

This research has been reviewed and approved by the North Coast NSW (NCNSW) Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The approval number is **HREA353 2023/ETH00021**.

Complaints or concerns about the study

If you are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the NCNSW HREC Executive Officer on:

Email NNSWLHD-Ethics@health.nsw.gov.au or phone 02 6672 0269

Survey information

Short title

Childbirth Experience

Coordinating principal investigator/principal investigator:

- Frances Guy, MNCLHD -Clinical Midwifery Consultant

Associate investigator(s):

- Professor Julie Jomeen, Southern Cross University- Professor of Midwifery and Executive Dean, Faculty of Health
- Dr Elaine Jefford, University of Sunshine Coast- Senior Lecturer
- Dr Marilyn Clarke, MNCLHD Coffs Harbour Health Campus- Staff Specialist Obstetrician
- Jennifer Darby, MNCLHD Coffs Harbour Health Campus- Midwifery Group Practice
- Angeline Landry, MNCLHD –Clinical Psychologist and Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Clinical Lead

Sites

- Coffs Harbour Health Campus –Maternity Service
- Port Macquarie Base Hospital-Maternity Service
- Kempsey District Hospital-Maternity Service
- Macksville Health Campus- Midwifery Group Practice
- Coffs Harbour –Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Service (AMIHS)
- Port Macquarie - Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Service (AMIHS)
- Macksville- Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Service (AMIHS)
- Coffs Harbour –Child and Family Health Services (C&FHS)
- Port Macquarie - Child and Family Health Services (C&FHS)
- Macksville- Child and Family Health Services (C&FHS)
- Kempsey- Child and Family Health Services (C&FHS)

All information is confidential and will be handled as soon as possible.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this study. This information sheet is for you to keep.