



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

MEDIA RELEASE

General Secretary: Brett Holmes | Assistant General Secretary: Judith Kiejda

☎ (02) 8595 1234 | www.facebook.com/nswnma | twitter.com/nswnma

5 May, 2014

Midwifery celebrated around the globe

The NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) will join thousands of practicing midwives, clinical midwifery educators, midwifery consultants, managers and student midwives today to recognise International Midwives' Day.

General Secretary of the NSWNMA, Brett Holmes, said it was an opportunity to appreciate the women and men who work tirelessly to ensure the safe arrival of newborns all around the world.

"With a baby born every one minute and 42 seconds across Australia we know just how invaluable the contribution midwives make towards the health and wellbeing of our community," Mr Holmes said.

"International Midwives' Day is a great chance to acknowledge their excellence and honour personal achievements throughout the profession.

"The role midwives play providing support, care and advice to mothers bringing new life into the world is extraordinary."

NSWNMA Councillor and Midwifery Unit Manager at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, O'Bray Smith, agreed International Midwives' Day was an important calendar event at the State's largest maternity hospital.

"At RPAH, we welcome around 5,500 babies into the world each year and we are always working hard to expand staff numbers as well as introduce more graduates into our rotation programs," Ms Smith said.

"We've introduced our first Midwifery Group Practice (MGP) which will go a long way towards offering improved continuity of care for women at RPA.

"MGPs enable women to be cared for by the same midwife throughout their pregnancy, during childbirth and in the weeks after birth. They lead to improved outcomes for women and their babies – and it's also what the women want.

"MGPs are cost effective and we hope they're expanded further."

Midwives at Westmead Hospital in Western Sydney have a special cause to celebrate, after successfully lobbying alongside the NSWNMA in recent years for the introduction of Birthrate Plus – a dedicated staffing tool for maternity services originally developed in the United Kingdom.

As a result, an additional 40 full-time equivalent positions were created at Westmead which has led to improved workloads, safety, support provided to women and also the education of trainees.

The development of continuity of care models for midwives, such as MGPs, is widely considered a positive step forward within the profession. The models assist midwives to manage their individual work structures and help strike a balance between on-call commitments and other care demands.



Appropriately, the NSWNMA has adopted the theme '*Nurses and Midwives: A Force for Change – Putting Patient Safety First*' for this year's International Midwives' Day celebrations.

International Midwives' Day was first celebrated in 1991 and is now observed in more than 50 countries.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Brett Holmes, General Secretary, NSWNMA 0414 550 324

Gia Hayne, Media Advisor, NSWNMA 0488 015 317