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Midwives delivering miracles around the globe

Mothers and their midwives will today reflect on the profound importance of woman-centred care as hundreds of newborns are delivered into the world on this International Day of the Midwife.

Advocating for safe maternity care, alongside better pay and conditions, the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) has acknowledged thousands of midwives and midwifery students learning to be the practitioners of tomorrow.

NSWNMA General Secretary, Shaye Candish, said midwives worked selflessly around the clock to ensure newborns arrive safely and to support women during a significant life event.

"Our midwives really are incredible, they are constantly developing their skills and advancing their practices with evidence-based learnings to improve outcomes for those in their care," said Ms Candish.

NSWNMA Assistant General Secretary and midwife, Michael Whaites, said wellbeing throughout the maternity journey was paramount.

"Midwifery care is constantly evolving to ensure policies are reviewed and best practices are adopted. Midwifery might be one of the oldest professions, but it is forever updating to deliver the best possible care outcomes," Mr Whaites said.

"Over the last decade we have seen maternity services struggle, but we now have a state government willing to work with us to improve staffing levels in the public health system.

"The midwifery profession has a stronger future as we build on state and federal government's understanding of the benefits of midwives working to their full scope of practice, and also towards increasing midwifery-led models of care."

NSWNMA Councillor and Illawarra midwife, Emma Gedge, said it was crucial for governments to increase investment in the midwifery workforce.

"We need so many more midwives. So, making midwifery a more accessible profession to get into, having more pathways into midwifery, better working conditions and better pay so that it's more attractive to join the profession," said Ms Gedge.

NSWNMA Auburn Hospital branch member and midwife, Enass Akkouch, agreed that increased support for midwives on the floor was desperately needed.

"It's amazing the difference having support can make whilst working, especially when our shift is overwhelming. I also believe that better shift by shift ratios will draw people to enter the profession as that's such a big issue preventing people from entering healthcare," said Ms Akkouch.

NSWNMA John Hunter and John Hunter Children's Hospital branch delegate and midwife, Jessica Plater, said pressures on the current healthcare system had led to an exodus of midwives.

"Ratios and making our babies count in our workloads will go a long way into making our profession even more attractive. Our babies are some of our most vulnerable patients that we'll ever care for, and they don't have the ability to advocate for themselves," said Ms Plater.



“Babies are equally as important as their mothers and they need our support, so we become their advocates, along with their mothers, fathers and families and we need to be able to have the time to provide the necessary care and support they need.”

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