



National Preterm  
Birth Prevention  
COLLABORATIVE

update

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## Every Week Counts: National Preterm Birth Prevention Collaborative

### National Collaborative off to a successful start

National efforts currently underway to safely prevent preterm and early term birth celebrated a landmark event in Sydney recently.

Teams from more than 50 Australian maternity hospitals descended onto Sydney Olympic Park for the first critical Learning Session of the Every Week Counts - National Preterm Birth Prevention Collaborative.

Leading obstetricians, midwives, GPs, sonographers, neonatologists together with consumers and quality improvement experts, all came together with the hope to bridge the gap between what is actually happening on the ground and what we now know will improve outcomes for women and their babies.

These Hospital teams, representing every state and territory, ranged from the very largest tertiary services to services in regional and remote communities providing critical local care.



### Learning Session Focus

Teams were introduced to the evidence for the Collaborative, the shared collaborative aim, the change package, the measurement strategy, and the beginnings of quality improvement methodology.

Breakouts sessions on day 1 were centred on the primary drivers of the change package: leadership and culture, engagement with consumers, preterm birth prevention, and timing of birth in the early term.

Breakouts on day 2 provided time for teams to connect with services from the same jurisdiction as them. They enabled teams to meet their colleagues from the same state and jointly discuss their

planned changes to implement the improvements needed to reduce preterm and early term birth rates.

A clear highlight of the two days were the Story Boards for each hospital, which included a set of slides outlining their service, their improvement team, their baseline rates of preterm birth, their change ideas and the things they are currently proud of/wish to share with others.

Feedback from the event indicated that more than 95% of participants felt the event would help them to make positive change in their workplace. There were resoundingly positive comments made by participants about the opportunity to work together, which included: “Great interactive exercises”, “Amazing and passionate experts”, and “Really enjoyed the networking and seeing what amazing things are happening around Australia”. The feedback from the two days will be used to inform and improve future Learning Sessions to be held in 2023.

## Ongoing support for participating teams

Following the Learning Session, teams have continued to be supported with monthly All Team Coaching Calls. These virtual meetings provide guidance from improvement experts, allow time for questions, and support services to learn from each other.

Since the Learning Session, teams have also been briefed and trained on the Life QI platform; an all-in-one cloud-based quality improvement platform which contains a host of tools and templates to help organisations run projects, track data and analyse outcomes to make improvement happen.

Life QI is helping participating hospitals to connect and share learning, design Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycles, and allow them to readily chart their progress over time so they can see which change ideas are working. It will also help hospitals to share ideas with teams at similar hospitals.

## Next Steps

The next Learning Session will be held on 20-21 March 2023 in Melbourne. Earlier in March, the Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand will hold its Annual Congress and Pre-Congress Meetings also in Melbourne from 2-8 March 2023.



## Participating Health Services

Over 50 health Services have signed up to participate in the Every Week Counts National Preterm Birth Prevention Collaborative, including representatives from 64 Hospitals around Australia. This includes hospitals from every State and Territory of Australia, including those in the largest metropolitan hospitals and small regional and rural hospitals. A full list of participating services is available here:

**[Learn more](#)**

## Every Week Counts Resources for Women and Families

The last few weeks of pregnancy are important for healthy fetal development, particularly brain development, and can make a difference to short and long term outcomes. Utilising existing Every Week Counts resources developed by Women's and Babies Research will assist in raising awareness amongst clinicians, and women and their families about the benefits for babies who are born closer to their due date at 40 weeks. Read more about resources available here:

[Learn more](#)



## Highlighting the Key Role Midwives play in the Collaborative

Midwifery continuity of care is one of the key strategies being recommended by the Australian Preterm Birth Prevention Alliance to prevent preterm birth in Australia. Evidence from randomised controlled trials has confirmed that women are around 24% less likely to experience preterm birth where they receive continuity of care from a known midwife. This figure increases to 50% less likely for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander women who receive continuous care from a team that includes appropriate Indigenous membership. Further information is available via the Australian College of Midwives, Australian Midwifery News.

[Learn more](#)



## Our Partners

The Every Week Counts National Collaborative is a joint collaboration between the Australian Preterm Birth Prevention Alliance, Women's Healthcare Australasia (WHA), the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) and Safer Care Victoria, which is being funded by the Commonwealth Government through the Women's & Infants Research Foundation.

Partner organisations include Women's and Babies Research, Every Week Counts, Centre of Research Excellence in Stillbirth, Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand and the Australian College of Midwives.

For further information please contact Women's Healthcare Australasia

