

World Prematurity Day 2023: FAQs about preterm birth and the Every Week Counts National Preterm Birth Prevention Collaborative

- On Friday, 17 November we mark World Prematurity Day 2023 - a global movement to raise awareness of preterm and early term birth and the potentially devastating impact it can have on families.
- Being born too soon is the leading cause of death and disability in children up to five years of age.
- 1 in 12 babies in Australia is born premature; for Aboriginal babies, this rate is almost double at 15%.
- In Australia, more than 26,000 babies are born preterm each year with rates of preterm birth rising dramatically across the country and elsewhere over the last two decades.
- Worldwide, an estimated 13.4 million babies are born preterm each year. For one million of these babies, the day they're born is the day they die.
- Those born at the earliest gestational ages may suffer from severe and life-long problems such as cerebral palsy, developmental delay or blindness. For those born at a later gestation, even approaching full-term, there may be behavioural and learning problems.
- Caring for preterm infants is very expensive, and the socioeconomic impact is immense. A 2020 cost analysis revealed that the annual cost of untimely early birth to the Australian Government is \$1.4 billion each year with more than \$350 million of this spend on those needing education assistance due to their early birth.
- Following the success of a comprehensive preterm birth prevention program in the state of Western Australia in 2014/15, and early successes in other Australian states, the Australian Preterm Birth Prevention Alliance was established in June 2018. As part of the May 2021 Federal budget, the Alliance secured \$13.7 million to support Australia's world-first national program to safely reduce rates of preterm birth.
- The Every Week Counts National Preterm Birth Prevention Collaborative aims to safely reduce preterm and early term birth across Australia by 20% through supporting hospitals in the adoption of evidence-based changes in clinical care.
- This Commonwealth-funded national program involves obstetricians, midwives, GPs, sonographers, neonatologists together with consumers and quality improvement experts from more than 63 Australian maternity hospitals. The results of the Collaborative will be available by mid/late 2024. Exciting progress will be unveiled at the Showcase event in Canberra in March 2024.

Hospital sites participating in the Every Week Counts National Preterm Birth Prevention Collaborative

Northern Territory

Royal Darwin and Palmerston Hospital

Western Australia

Albany Health Campus
Armadale Health Service
Broome Health Campus
Bunbury Hospital
Fiona Stanley Hospital
King Edward Memorial Hospital
Osborne Park Hospital

South Australia

Flinders Medical Centre
Lyell McEwin Hospital
Riverland Mallee Coorong Local Health Network
• Murray Bridge Soldier's Memorial Hospital
• Loxton Hospital
• Waikerie Health Service
• Riverland General Hospital
Women's and Children's Hospital

Victoria

Angliss Hospital
Barwon Health
Box Hill Hospital
Ballarat Base Hospital
Frances Perry House
Joan Kirner Women's & Children's Hospital
Latrobe Regional Hospital
Mercy Hospital for Women

Monash Medical Centre
Peninsula Health
Portland District Health
The Northern Hospital
The Royal Women's Hospital
Wangaratta District Base Hospital
Wodonga Hospital

Tasmania

Launceston General Hospital
Northwest Regional Hospital
Royal Hobart Hospital

Queensland

Darling Downs Health
• Kingaroy Hospital • Chinchilla Hospital
• Stanthorpe Hospital • Dalby Hospital
• Warwick Hospital • Goondiwindi Hospital
• Toowoomba Hospital
Gold Coast University Hospital
Ipswich Hospital
Mater Mothers Hospital
Sunshine Coast University Hospital
The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital
Townsville University Hospital

New South Wales

Campbelltown Hospital
Fairfield Hospital
Griffith Base Hospital
Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District
• Wollongong Hospital • Shoalhaven Hospital
Royal Hospital for Women
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital
Southern NSW Local Health District
• Queanbeyan District Hospital
• Moruya District Hospital
• South East Regional Hospital - Bega
• Goulburn District Hospital
• Cooma District Hospital

St George Hospital
Sutherland Hospital
Wagga Wagga Base Hospital
Westmead Hospital

Australian Capital Territory

Centenary Hospital for Women and Children

50+ maternity hospitals working
together to prevent preterm birth

