



The Royal Australian
and New Zealand
College of Obstetricians
and Gynaecologists



NEW ZEALAND
COLLEGE OF
MIDWIVES (INC)



The Royal New Zealand
College of General Practitioners



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PRAISE FOR PROGRAMME TO BENEFIT MOTHERS AND BABIES

“The Government’s new maternity quality and safety programme is a big step forward in providing New Zealanders having babies with a safer, more streamlined birthing experience,” say four medical colleges representing specialists involved in the maternity care team.

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG), the New Zealand College of Midwives (NZCOM), the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (RNZCGP) and the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) make their comments in response to an announcement from the Minister of Health today confirming the launch of the Government’s new maternity quality and safety programme.

Hon Tony Ryall announced the delivery of the Government’s plan to improve maternity services in New Zealand, which includes new maternity standards, revised referral guidelines for midwives and doctors, and a set of clinical indicators.

“This is a giant leap in the right direction for improving maternity care standards in New Zealand,” says Mr John Tait, Chair of the RANZCOG New Zealand Committee.

“The programme proposed by the Ministry of Health will lead to improvements in the care of pregnant women and their babies, and supports seamless, collaborative maternity care. It validates all of the hard work by everyone involved in developing this programme over the past two years.”

RNZCGP President Dr Harry Pert emphasises the importance of a good start to life. “There is a need for quality care from pregnancy through to birth and then with ongoing care for

both the infant and their family. The College welcomes the contribution that the quality and safety programme will make towards this.”

Dr Geoff Long, Chair of ANZCA's New Zealand National Committee, says that ANZCA strongly endorses the new maternity quality and safety programme.

“Anaesthetists are part of the maternity care team, providing pain relief, notably epidurals, for women giving birth and anaesthesia when a caesarian is required. They can also have a vital role in resuscitation of the newborn.

“The new Maternity Quality and Safety Programme demands the involvement of the professional colleges in ensuring that New Zealand's Maternity Standards are met. That is core business for us as a college and we welcome this opportunity to improve the care of pregnant women and their babies.

“We look forward to working with the Ministry and other colleges to see that these new standards are met,” Dr Long says.

Obstetricians, midwives, general practitioners, anaesthetists and other maternity stakeholders have been working collaboratively in conjunction with the Ministry of Health on the maternity quality and safety programme.

Also announced today was the publication of the Perinatal and Maternal Mortality Review Committee's (PMMRC) fifth annual report on the deaths of babies and their mothers in New Zealand.

“The New Zealand PPMRC system provides valuable information for health professionals and families and reassurance that continual improvement is the aim of the maternity service” says Karen Guilliland Chief Executive of the New Zealand College of Midwives.

“The release of the new maternity quality and safety programme today aims to improve communication, teamwork and the quality of maternity care for New Zealand women. It will also address many of the issues and concerns raised in the PMMRC report,” says Mr Tait.

The programme also includes a rebuilt information system for comprehensive collection of maternity data that will go live this coming weekend to better record and monitor antenatal, birth and postnatal care for mothers and babies. The creation of a standardised, single set of electronic maternity notes for each pregnant woman is also underway.

RANZCOG, NZCOM, RNZCGP and ANZCA strongly support the seamless collaborative model of care which sees doctors, midwives and other health professionals working together for the benefit of pregnant women and their babies. This programme will ensure expectant mothers are able to access and receive the best care available, and enhance data sharing between healthcare professionals.

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About RANZCOG:

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG) is dedicated to maintaining the highest possible standards in obstetrics and gynaecology in Australia and New Zealand.

About NZCOM:

The New Zealand College of Midwives (the NZCOM) is the professional organisation setting the standards for all employed and self employed midwives in New Zealand.

About RNZCGP:

The Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (RNZCGP) is the professional body which provides training and ongoing professional development for general practitioners and rural hospital generalists, and sets standards for general practice.

About ANZCA:

The Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists is responsible for the training and assessment of anaesthetists in New Zealand and for setting and maintaining standards of practice.

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