

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY**

**WRITTEN QUESTION**

Mrs Finocchiaro to the Minister for Health:

**Community Midwifery Program**

1. What is the reasoning behind the changes to the Community Midwifery Program (CMP)?
2. What resources have been committed to implementing more continuity of care of low risk women giving birth?
3. What measures have been put in place to encourage private practicing midwives to the Top End?

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**RESPONSE**

- 1. What is the reasoning behind the changes to the Community Midwifery Program (CMP)?**

The Top End Health Service Community Midwifery Program was previously providing case management care to a small cohort of women with well pregnancies (<10 per cent of the total birthing population). Integration of the Community Midwifery Program model into a Midwifery Group Practice aims to prioritise providing high level continuity of care and increased care coordination for women with complex pregnancies, including those with significant medical, obstetric or psychosocial risk factors.

- 2. What resources have been committed to implementing more continuity of care of low risk women giving birth?**

In line with national standards of care, a Team Midwifery Model of Care has been developed to prioritise continuity of care and place-based care for women with well pregnancies. The women are likely to see all four midwives over the course of their antenatal care. This level of continuity of care is similar to that received by women under the previous Community Midwifery Program model. The midwives are rostered in the antenatal clinic, delivery suite and postnatal home-visiting service every week. This generally means a known midwife is caring for the woman in labour. Another benefit of this model is the availability of antenatal appointments close to home or work, with clinics offered at Coconut Grove, Palmerston and the Darwin Birth Centre.

Women with well pregnancies are also able to access continuity of care with an accredited General Practitioner. Over the last 12 months, over 25 General Practitioners have successfully been accredited to provide antenatal care in collaboration with Royal Darwin Hospital. This will enable women to see the same antenatal care provider for the whole course of their pregnancy.

Women with well pregnancies are able to access continuity of midwifery care with the Midwifery Group Practice Orange team. This team prioritises community based midwifery care to well women planning a homebirth.

### **3. What measures have been put in place to encourage private practicing midwives to the Top End?**

The Northern Territory Department of Health has developed a suite of documents, pending ratification, that relate to Privately Practicing Midwives. A specific webpage within the Department of Health's internet site is under development with information to support and encourage midwives to apply for the appropriate registration.