

## Our Vision



## Our Work

**QCMB Prospectus**  
Last updated April 2012

# About QCMB

## Director's Message

Welcome to the Queensland Centre for Mothers & Babies 2012 prospectus. These pages contain a snapshot of where we have come from and what we want to achieve in the future to improve maternity care in Queensland for women, their support people and the many dedicated professionals who work in the area.

In our first three years we have collaborated with consumers and professionals to develop a range of innovative projects such as the Having a Baby in Queensland survey, the first independent survey in Queensland to evaluate maternity care from a consumer perspective, and Birthplace, an online tool to access information on all birthing facilities across the State.

We're now entering an exciting new phase where we will continue making a positive impact on Queensland's maternity services. I hope you find our prospectus useful and informative and we look forward to working with you we embark on the next stage of its work.

**Professor Sue Kruske, Director, Queensland Centre for Mothers & Babies**

## Who We Are

A review of Queensland's maternity services in 2004 recommended the Queensland Government establish a centre to provide much-needed leadership to progress improvements in maternity care services.

The Queensland Centre for Mothers & Babies was established at The University of Queensland in 2009 and is the only independent, research-based centre in Australia established to work towards consumer-focused maternity care that is integrated, evidence-based and provides optimal choices for women in Queensland.

Maternity care is a complex area of health care where the services for women are provided by a range of clinicians including midwives, obstetricians, general practitioners, social workers, physiotherapists and other professionals. The work of the QCMB supports both the consumers receiving the care and the professionals giving the care. We also provide independent, research-based advice to maternity policy makers and community leaders.

## QCMB Vision

Queensland women will have access to maternity care that is recognised for its excellence nationally and internationally.

## Mission

To contribute to maternity care in Queensland that is woman-centred, integrated, evidence-based and provides optimal choices for all women.

## Objectives

With the establishment of the QCMB, the following three objectives were identified in the service agreement with the Queensland Government:

- Facilitate two-way community and consumer advocacy through consultation and communication
- Develop rapport and integration across all stakeholder groups
- Influence maternity services research and quality frameworks

How these objectives are translated into practice is explained on **pages 10-15**.

## Deliverables

A number of deliverables were set as part of the funding agreement with the Queensland Government. They range from reporting on the findings of the Having a Baby In Queensland survey to detailing the dissemination of our work. The full list of deliverables is available on our website:

**[www.qcmb.org.au/reports/menu/publications\\_downloads](http://www.qcmb.org.au/reports/menu/publications_downloads)**



# Our Strategy

## Strategic Directions

The QCMB has developed a number of strategic directions to guide our work and meet our objectives. These directions are further explained on **pages 10-15**.

### Direction 1

Generate and disseminate evidence that:

- Supports women to be better informed and actively involved in decision making about their maternity care
- Enhances the capacity of care providers and policy makers to understand, and respond to, the needs and preferences of women accessing maternity care
- Helps provide optimal choices for women accessing maternity care

### Direction 2

- Advocate for and facilitate the embedding of evidence into the delivery of maternity care across Queensland

### Direction 3

- Facilitate effective communication and collaboration between maternity care providers and women

### Direction 4

Address inequalities in access and quality of maternity care for:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women
- Women living in rural and remote communities

### Direction 5

- Implement effective marketing and engagement strategies to advance the QCMB's mission

### Direction 6

- Ensure the sustainability of the QCMB

# Our Governance

## QCMB Governance

Our work is informed by our stakeholders and those in the wider community with an interest in maternity care in Queensland. We know that meaningful change cannot be achieved in isolation and relies on collaboration, strong relationships and negotiation.

Governance at the QCMB was initially in the form of the Queensland Maternity Care Collaborative, an association of stakeholder representatives who acted as a conduit to pass information to and from the various stakeholder groups about our activities. The Collaborative was also a platform for feedback on various aspects of our work.

As we move toward the next stage of the QCMB's work, we have redeveloped the governance structure to include a small advisory group of strategic experts to work closer with us and have greater input into our outcomes. In addition, a number of other key stakeholder groups (key consumers, key professionals and project reference groups) have been approached to inform and receive information on our key activities.

## Governance Map

The Governance Map (**below**) represents the interaction of the various stakeholders with the QCMB. Our staff work closely with the Chief Investigators and the Advisory Group to set our strategic pathways. A second tier of key consumers, health and industry members are encouraged to contribute to our work. Finally, five major stakeholder groups (**see opposite page**) form a wider consultation ring in key research areas.



### QCMB Chief Investigators

Professor Christina Lee  
Dr Yvette Miller  
Ms Rachel Thompson  
Professor Cindy Gallois  
Dr Bernadette Watson

# Our Stakeholders

## The Five Ps

We have identified a number of stakeholder groups to inform, plan and direct our work. When communicating and disseminating the work of the QCMB, we tailor our messages to meet the needs of each of these groups. They are broadly grouped under the five areas of Parents, Politicians, Policy makers, Professionals and Partners:

### Parents

Women are the primary focus of our work. Effective services must support each woman's unique journey and include the people who play key supporting roles.

### Partners

These stakeholders include current and potential partners such as other researchers and non-government groups

### Professionals

The range of health disciplines who contribute to maternity care including midwives, obstetricians, managers, neonatologists, paediatricians, child health nurses, allied health, lactation consultants, child birth educators, GPs, professional colleges, future professionals (students)

### Policy makers

State and Federal public servants including the Director General and Deputy Director General of Queensland Health, Primary & Extended Care Branch, Child Health, Nursing and Midwifery Office, Quality and Safety, LHHNs, Medicare Local

### Politicians

Current State & Federal politicians as well as their political advisors

# Our Programs

## THE HAVING A BABY IN QUEENSLAND SURVEY PROGRAM

The Having a Baby in Queensland Survey program monitors women's experiences of care during pregnancy, labour and birth and after birth. We are particularly interested in the specific service improvements that may enhance women's experience.

We conduct regular statewide surveys of women's experiences of maternity care to monitor the appropriateness, effectiveness, quality, safety and evidence-base of services in Queensland.

Information from these surveys is disseminated back to women, politicians, policy makers and other stakeholders at a facility, district and State level to highlight areas of strength and provide recommendations on ways to improve care.

Following a pilot survey, conducted in 2009, population-level surveys have been conducted in 2010 and 2012, in partnership with the Queensland Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages. In 2012, we will conduct a specific survey for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander women, gathering their experiences of Queensland maternity care. More information on this survey can be found on **page 13**.

The 2009 and 2010 survey reports can be accessed at [www.qcmb.org.au/publications\\_and\\_reports/menu/publications\\_downloads](http://www.qcmb.org.au/publications_and_reports/menu/publications_downloads). Survey data is also available to researchers, students and interested stakeholders. For information on how to access the data visit [www.qcmb.org.au/survey\\_program\\_data\\_access\\_analysis\\_publication\\_policy](http://www.qcmb.org.au/survey_program_data_access_analysis_publication_policy)



Having a Baby in Queensland  
**Your Story**

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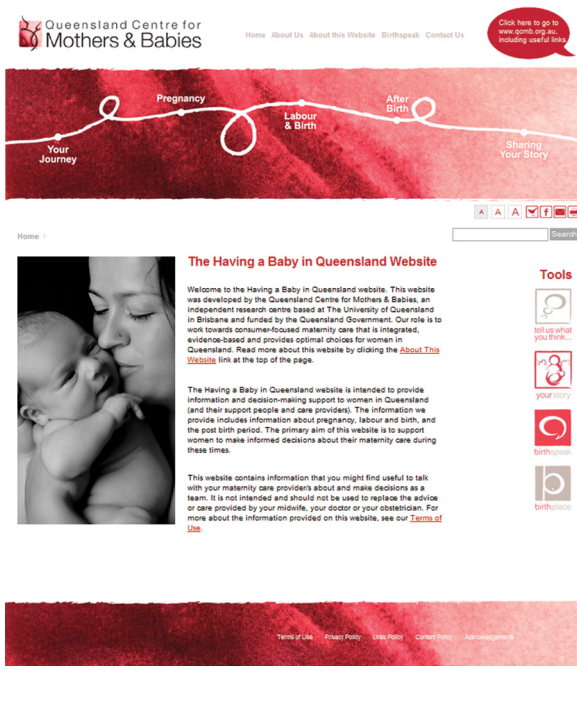
# Our Programs

## THE HAVING A BABY IN QUEENSLAND WEBSITE

The Having a Baby in Queensland Website — [www.havingababy.org.au](http://www.havingababy.org.au) — recognises the need for greater consumer access to independent information about maternity care approaches and outcomes, and greater consumer participation in care decisions. The website contains strategies to increase women's access to trustworthy information and supports them to become more involved in the decisions about their care.

These strategies include:

- **Decision Aids:** provide evidence-based information about pregnancy, labour and birth. All options for particular decisions, evidence about the possible experience and consequences of each option and guidance in the steps of decision making are covered (**see below for topics**). We have the skills to develop further decision aids for the multitude of other pregnancy, labour, birth and post-birth decisions that women and care providers face and welcome collaboration to develop and evaluate these.
- **Birthplace:** an interactive, searchable database that allows users to view the profiles of birthing facilities (public hospitals, public birth centres or private hospitals) including their policies and practices, quality of care and rates of consumer satisfaction with care. Birthplace was developed to support women to find out about their chosen place of birth and, where possible, to support women to choose the birthing facility that best meets their individual needs and preferences.
- **Birthspeak:** a dictionary of maternity care 'jargon' that provides clear and accessible definitions of terms.



### Topics covered by the Decision Aids include:

- Choices about how to birth your baby
- Monitoring your baby during labour
- Choices about positions during labour and birth
- Choices about epidural
- Choices about episiotomy
- Choices about how to birth your placenta
- Choices about how your labour will start

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# Our Programs

## THE WISE MATERNITY CARE PROGRAM

Effective maternity care involves maternity care professionals working together with women to produce quality outcomes. In particular, effective care is seamless and individually-tailored for women from pregnancy, through to labour and birth, and into the post-birth period. This relies on effective communication, respect and trust between different carers.

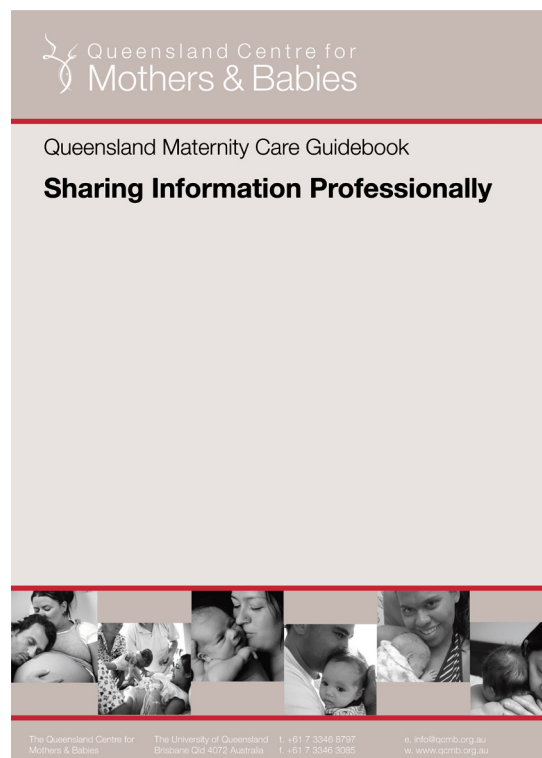
In 2010, we conducted a survey asking maternity care providers to share their perceptions of collaboration in Queensland. Inadequate or problematic communication was identified by maternity carers as an important factor in inhibiting the delivery of maternity services. From these findings, we developed the WISE Guidelines (**W**oman-centred, **I**nterprofessional and **S**ystem supported at **E**very stage of care) to enhance collaboration between maternity care providers and with consumers, through effective communication.

To date, the program has:

- Developed a model of communication that improve the sharing of information between care providers, and between care providers and their clients
- Developed guidelines that identify tools and resources for implementing the model of effective communication
- Developed and now piloting a training program to enhance information sharing between care providers, and between care providers and their clients (**see page 12**)

For more information visit:

**[www.qcmb.org.au/the\\_maternity\\_care\\_communication\\_and\\_collaboration\\_project/menu/research\\_projects](http://www.qcmb.org.au/the_maternity_care_communication_and_collaboration_project/menu/research_projects)**



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# Our Programs

## SPECIAL PROJECTS

In addition to our core programs of work, we conduct a number of special projects. These projects are on agreed topics with Queensland Health and form part of the initial funding structure for the QCMB. Past and present projects include:

### 2010 Special Projects

- **The Having a Baby in Queensland Book** — the book provides information and decision-making support for pregnant women. The book includes standardised, evidence-based and objective information related to pregnancy, labour and birth. Copies of the book can be downloaded at [www.qcmb.org.au/media/pdf/Book.pdf](http://www.qcmb.org.au/media/pdf/Book.pdf). Individual decision aids, which make up the book, are also available for download from [www.havingababy.org.au](http://www.havingababy.org.au)

### 2011 Special Projects

- **Evaluation of the Universal Postnatal Contact initiative (UPNC)** — we evaluated the effectiveness of the Queensland Government's UPNC initiative. The project involved extensive consultation with facility representatives, care providers and women in select sites across Queensland. By using data collected as part of the Having a Baby in Queensland 2010 Survey, we examined how effectively the initiative was implemented and how the initiative influenced women's satisfaction with their postnatal care. For more information visit: [www.qcmb.org.au/the\\_upnc\\_project/menu/research\\_projects](http://www.qcmb.org.au/the_upnc_project/menu/research_projects)
- **Parent Information Sheets** — in collaboration with the Statewide Maternity and Neonatal Clinical Guidelines team, we developed a series of parent information sheets. The sheets aim to promote consistency of information sharing with parents across Queensland and include topics such as preterm labour, induction, stillbirth and VBAC. Future information sheets will expand beyond the Clinical Guidelines framework in response to the needs of women. Copies of the parent information sheets can be downloaded at [www.qcmb.org.au/parent\\_information\\_sheets](http://www.qcmb.org.au/parent_information_sheets)
- **Maternity Consumer Representatives Training program** — the demand for maternity consumer representatives is increasing everyday and yet most consumer representatives have never had the opportunity to receive formal training to help with their role. To address this gap, we partnered with Health Consumers Queensland and Maternity Coalition to develop, implement and evaluate a pilot training program specifically for consumer representatives of maternity services. For more information about the program visit: [www.qcmb.org.au/consumerretraining/menu/research\\_projects](http://www.qcmb.org.au/consumerretraining/menu/research_projects)

### 2012 Special Projects

- **The Rural Maternity Initiative (RMI)** — Queensland Health allocated funding to rural health districts from 2008-2011 to strengthen and sustain rural maternity services and promote women's access to midwifery care. This project aims to review the existing RMI sites and further strengthen women's access to continuity of midwifery care models across rural and remote Queensland.

# Our Objectives:

## Influence maternity services research & quality frameworks

### QCMB Strategic Direction 1

#### Generate and disseminate evidence that:



**enables women to be better informed and actively involved in decision-making about their maternity care**



**enhances the capacity of care providers and policy makers to understand, and respond to, the requirements of women accessing maternity care**



**provides optimal choices for women accessing maternity care**

We aim to be an integral part of Queensland's maternity care landscape by supporting women to make better decisions about their care and to affect policy change to improve processes and outcomes across the sector. To facilitate this we translate our research into usable and relevant outcomes for our stakeholders in a number of ways.

Findings from the Having a Baby in Queensland Survey program (**see page 6**) are used for targeted activities including:

- Birthplace (**see page 7**)
- Feedback of survey data to individual facilities through Facility Level Reports
- Bringing together research from a range of evidence-based sources to improve access to information for women and advocating for service change (**see below for an example on use of water in labour and birth**)
- Peer reviewed journal articles, conference presentations and facility-based in-service seminars



We also provide information to women to assist them in making informed decisions about their care through:

- Decision Aids (**see page 7**)
- Baby Bites (maternity care research snapshots)
- Parent Information Sheets (**see page 9**)
- The WISE Women's Information Program (**see pages 8 & 12**)
- Use of the media to disseminate research

**Water in labour and birth in Queensland is an area where there is wide variation in women being able to access it, despite good evidence to support its use and high levels of satisfaction in women who use it.**

We collated information from a wide range of sources to answer the following questions:

- what the literature (evidence) says?
- facility policies across Queensland?
- what the policies say?
- what the women say (survey results)?
- what the women want (blogs)?
- what the practice is?
- what can we do about it?

This led to a number of activities including:

- a brief to policy makers
- an overview of the issues sent to GPs, midwives and obstetricians for publications in their newsletter
- information on our facebook page and other social media outlets
- promotion of information in parenting blogs
- a media release

# Our Objectives:

## Influence maternity services research & quality frameworks

### QCMB Strategic Direction 2



**Advocate for and facilitate the embedding of choice and evidence into the delivery of maternity care across Queensland**



Our focus is to embed choice and evidence as key components of maternity care in Queensland. Another key aspect of maternity care change is to make it more woman-centred.

Part of that involves promoting the ethical and legal right of informed decision making, where a woman is fully informed about what is happening to her during her maternity care experience so she is able to make appropriate decisions.

We are looking at what this means in practice and how information materials can be developed and presented to help women, and their carers, in this process.

#### **Examples of how we strive to achieve this include:**

- Decision Aids (**see page 7**)
- Participation in working groups and providing feedback to clinical guidelines developed by the State-wide Maternal and Neonatal Clinical Network
- Work closely with consumer representative groups
- Use survey findings to highlight areas where women report high and low levels of informed decision making

We also take an active role in policy change and development. We provide policy briefs and regularly meet with policy officers to promote woman-centred care and highlight gaps in policy and service provision that impact negatively on women.

We are often approached to provide an evidence-based voice on steering committees and working groups. We welcome such participation to facilitate communication of our findings and share our evidence of consumer perspectives. We also produce and disseminate evidence that can inform policy change through applied activities such as the evaluation of the Universal Post Natal Contact Program and the Rural Maternity Initiative.

We actively promote genuine and effective external consumer representation in the planning, implementation and review of all aspects of maternity care. The Maternity Consumer Representative Training program (**see page 9**) was a successful partnership between QCMB, Maternity Coalition and Health Consumers Queensland. Additional partnerships with other key consumer groups such as Australian Breastfeeding Association, Playgroup Australia, Friends of the Birth Centre and Homebirth Queensland, are an integral component of our work.

# Our Objectives:

Develop rapport and integration across all stakeholder groups

## QCMB Strategic Direction 3

 **Facilitate effective communication and collaboration between maternity care providers and women**

Communication and collaboration between care providers, and care providers and women, is an important issue in maternity care. Providing women with a range of information that is accessible and meaningful will enhance their decision making confidence and capacity.

As part of this we have produced:

- **The Sharing Information Professionally Program**  
A training program to assist maternity care providers to refresh their skills on effective information sharing. The program goes through the WISE Guidelines (**W**oman-centred, **I**nterprofessional and **S**ystem supported at **E**very stage of care) in an interactive way that trains care providers about professional information sharing and helps them inform women about communicating with their care providers.
- **The Women's Information Program**  
A program to help women become aware of how the WISE Guidelines can help them when communicating with their care providers. The intention of this program is to support women to feel confident in communicating with care providers and be active participants in their care.



Both programs are being piloted from February to May in 2012 at three hospital sites in Goondiwindi, Ipswich and the Gold Coast. See **page 8** for more information about the training programs or visit [www.wisematernitycare.org.au](http://www.wisematernitycare.org.au)

### **Other activities to facilitate the promotion of consumer, interprofessional and inter-agency communication with women include:**

- Queensland-wide consultation in 2010 that identified areas of need, which were documented in the QCMB 2010 Roadshow report ([www.qcmb.org.au/reports/menu/publications\\_downloads](http://www.qcmb.org.au/reports/menu/publications_downloads))
- Facility Level Reports using survey findings to highlight areas of strength and needs around interpersonal and communication factors
- Birthplace facility tool that provides information to women that promotes communication (**see page 7**)
- Evaluation of programs such as the Universal Postnatal Contact initiative and the Rural Maternity initiative (**see page 9**)
- Consumer and health forums to stimulate interactions between the QCMB and stakeholders



# Our Objectives:

Influence maternity services research and quality frameworks

## QCMB Strategic Direction 4

Address inequalities in access and quality of maternity care for:



**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women**



**Women living in rural and remote communities**



The QCMB Indigenous program is partnering with the Indigenous community to address birthing and maternity care and to advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women living in urban, rural and remote areas.

In 2012, we will conduct the Having a Baby in Queensland Indigenous survey in targeted areas of the State. To assist with this process, we are partnering with well-established networks of health workers and organisations that currently exist within Queensland. These networks include, but are not limited to, Murri Mum's and Bubs groups, family support workers, Indigenous health workers, midwives, community workers, Indigenous liaison officers, field workers, hospital staff and Aboriginal Medical Services' staff.

We are employing and training women from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to be peer interviewers across South East Queensland and a number of regional and rural sites. The peer interview training will take place in Brisbane and women will conduct the surveys in one-on-one interviews in their local areas. Support will be provided by the QCMB Indigenous Program manager and the midwives and health workers at their local health facility or Aboriginal Medical Service.

For more information on the project visit:

[www.qcmb.org.au/aboriginal\\_and\\_torres\\_strait\\_islander\\_maternity\\_care\\_program/menu/research\\_projects](http://www.qcmb.org.au/aboriginal_and_torres_strait_islander_maternity_care_program/menu/research_projects)

**We are committed to work that addresses issues specific to rural and remote women. In 2012 we will evaluate the Rural Maternity Initiative as well as focusing on disseminating survey findings from rural and remote women.**

This work will include:

- Reporting the experiences of women who are required to relocate for birth
- Exploring and describing the characteristics and experiences of women who choose to birth away from their local facility
- Identifying factors that impact on the availability of rural and remote women's access to continuity of midwifery care
- Exploring the gaps in the support of rural and remote women in the postnatal period
- Promoting evidence where discrepancies exist in survey findings
- Expanding on past efforts to engage rural and remote women

# Our Objectives:

Facilitate two-way community & consumer advocacy through consultation & communication

## QCMB Strategic Direction 5



**Implement effective marketing and engagement strategies to advance the QCMB mission**

Effective engagement strategies are crucial to achieving the goals of the QCMB. It is only by communicating that we can connect with our stakeholders and target audiences.

By utilising our independence and research strengths we can tailor our messages to best suit the relevant stakeholders.

Part of our mission has been to identify our specific stakeholder groups – the 5Ps (**see page 5**) – and how we can best engage with them.

Our engagement strategies for these groups include:

- **Parents** (women) – listen to their stories through the survey, implement key social media tools and foster conversations
- **Politicians** – promote the QCMB as a vehicle to help achieve policy goals such as the National Maternity Services Plan and Queensland Health's 10 percent continuity-of-care target
- **Policy makers** – representation on reference groups and working groups such as the Statewide Maternity & Neonatal Clinical Guidelines working group and the Midwifery Advisory group
- **Professionals** – help bridge the gap between policy and implementation by collaborating, networking and communicating our work
- **Partners** – foster potential partnerships to expand the work and reach of the QCMB



### Some of our other marketing and engagement activities include:

- Active dissemination of survey data through reports, media releases and website content
- Advertising on key parenting websites
- Disseminating research via conferences
- Sponsorship of events that target stakeholders (e.g. professional gatherings, consumer expos)



# Our Objectives:

## Influence maternity services research and quality frameworks

### QCMB Strategic Direction 6



Ensure the sustainability of the Queensland Centre for Mothers & Babies



Our funding from the Queensland Government runs from 2009 to 2013, but we aim to build a sustainable future beyond this time. Over the next 12 months we will greatly expand our partnerships, apply for further research grants, seek both State and Federal funding, attract consultancies, as well as seek philanthropic funding. Some of the strategies to do this include:

- **Partnerships:** work with researchers from other universities to look for synergies to add to our portfolio of work. This includes partners in the fields of medicine, midwifery, psychology, population health, social work and communication.
- **Research grants:** target grant streams through funding bodies such as the Australian Research Council, the National Health & Medical Research Council and others.
- **Federal & State funding:** look at further funding avenues with government departments that includes Federal funding for projects that have national or international relevance.
- **Consultancies:** use the established expertise within the QCMB as commercial consultants in areas such as survey design and execution, and independent evaluation of services.
- **Philanthropy:** explore philanthropic contributors in the field of maternity care.

### Looking Forward

The QCMB has established an international reputation for high quality, evidence-based and meaningful research.

We value our existing state, national and international partnerships and believe we have developed the first ever world-class, population-level benchmark data collection on decision making in maternity care.

We plan to continue to positively influence maternity care in Queensland throughout 2012 and beyond.

## **CONTACT US**

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The Queensland Centre for Mothers & Babies is an independent research centre based at The University of Queensland and funded by the Queensland Government