

# primary focus

Australian-first  
health clinic for  
new mums

page 6

## *what's inside*

- + Get "sMater" and earn CPD points
- + Meet Mater's maternity experts
- + New research into prenatal alcohol risks

## In this issue

04

Upcoming GP  
Education events

05

New sMater  
podcast

06

A breakthrough  
clinic for new mums

07

Maternity models  
of care

08

Meet our maternity  
experts

11

Prenatal alcohol  
exposure

12

What's in  
the works

15

New neonatology  
appointment

16

Mater's network  
of hospitals



Helpful videos for

 **mater** mothers

# new parents

There's so much to discover  
about caring for a new baby.

Our website has helpful videos  
designed specifically for new parents.



### Reconciliation

In the spirit of reconciliation, Mater acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

 Learn more about our Reconciliation Action Plan at [mater.org.au/rap](https://mater.org.au/rap)

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## Thank you for your warm welcome

**I have had a whirlwind first month at the helm, yet the warmth and generosity I have experienced has already made me feel at home here at Mater.**

I have been busy touring Mater's network of hospitals and services, along with Mater Research, Mater Education and Mater Foundation, and have been fortunate enough to meet many members of our medical community along the way.

**It has been wonderful to hear valuable insights into Mater, its people and practices. I have also relished the shared excitement about the future and what that holds.**

Mater has a strong history as a leading Australian healthcare provider that pursues new technologies to deliver healthcare, makes meaningful discoveries, curates educational opportunities and collaborates with its people and communities.

I want to assure you that this will not change. Our Mission and values continue to drive us, and people—our partners, patients, staff and communities—remain at the heart of all that we do.

We will continue to implement and embrace change, and we will do this in collaboration with our medical community, our people and our patients. Healthcare is evolving. It is complex and, like most industries, it has its challenges. But it is essential, full of opportunities and is life-changing.

I look forward to working with you all to continue making a difference in peoples' lives and to promote the benefits of health and wellbeing.



*Julia Strickland-Bellamy*



## Improving health and wellbeing in your *community*

**Mater Foundation is a community-based fundraising organisation supporting your local Mater hospital, delivering world-class health services closer to home.**

As the healthcare needs of Queenslanders grow, so does the role of Mater Foundation. Mater Foundation is committed to improving regional access to world-class health

services, state-of-the-art equipment and highly skilled medical professionals, so you're close to the support you need, when you need it.

**Find out more at:**  
[www.materfoundation.org.au](http://www.materfoundation.org.au)



## The refugee health journey in primary care

**GPs and practice staff are encouraged to learn about the recent changes to the rules relating to new arrivals from refugee backgrounds and how to access support for patients in primary care.**

Attendees will hear from guest speakers including the Mater Refugee Complex Care Clinic's Clinical Director, Dr Rebecca Farley, the Refugee Health Network Queensland's GP Fellow, Dr Rachel Claydon, and Medeco Inala's GP, Dr Deborah Hillman-White.

The Brisbane South PHN event will also include a panel discussion to demonstrate how services can assist individuals with specific needs to work closely with primary care providers.

**Date:** Wednesday 25 June

**Time:** Registration and refreshments from 5.30pm | Event 6pm–8pm

**Venue:** Tzu Chi Foundation, 60 Rosebank Square, Salisbury, or virtually via Teams.

### ? More information

✉ [multicultural@bsphn.org.au](mailto:multicultural@bsphn.org.au)

➔ [In person registration](#)

➔ [Online registration](#)



## Dr Maria Boulton joins sMater

**Mater has welcomed Dr Maria Boulton, GP and former AMA Queensland President, to its sMater podcast team as co-host alongside broadcaster and journalist Jillian Whiting.**

### Why did you join sMater?

I'm a huge believer in education and, as a GP, we're always learning. Podcasts are a really good way to get those educational moments. I started listening to podcasts when I waited on the school pick up line for my kids; it was a great time to just digest a little bit of education.

### What do you hope to contribute to sMater?

I hope I can use my clinical experience and insights to ask the questions my GP colleagues are interested in. Similarly, it also allows me to have some input into the topics discussed. I have a broad network of GP colleagues and have an understanding of what we want to learn more about. For instance, we're seeing a lot of viruses and we're seeing a lot of long-COVID, so we've just recorded an episode with Professor Paul Griffin, Mater's Director of Infectious Diseases. We're also getting a lot of questions about menopause and perimenopause, which was really relevant when we spoke with gynaecologist Dr Melanie Allen.

### What do you hope your colleagues take away from sMater?

I hope my colleagues learn as much as I do. It's just nice to have that 30-minute podcast that you can listen to and learn the latest about what is available for our patients and how we can access it. It is also about learning what is on the horizon, so what is in the future for vaccines? What's in the future for bowel cancer? That's been really, really interesting.

## GP Maternity Shared Care Alignment—Seminar 3

**GPs wanting to provide maternity shared care with Mater Mothers' Hospital are invited to attend GP Maternity Shared Care Alignment seminars.**

**The multidisciplinary program has a focus on best practice maternity care in the general practice setting**

Seminar 3 is an option for GPs who have completed Seminar 1. The program has a focus on perinatal mental health and medical and obstetric complications in pregnancy.

**Date:** Saturday 19 July

**Time:** 8am–1pm

**Venue:** Corbett Room, Level 1, Whitty Building, Mater South Brisbane

### ? More information

✉ [GPL@mater.org.au](mailto:GPL@mater.org.au)

☎ 0466 205 710

➔ [Register here](#)

Online registrations for the seminar are essential.



## Mater's *breakthrough* time of birth study



Back: Senior Maternal Fetal Medicine Specialist Prof Sailesh Kumar and clinical midwife Kieran Froese.

Front: Journalist and TV presenter Jillian Whiting with GP and former AMAQ President Dr Maria Boulton.

### A new Mater Research study suggests that birth at 39 –40 weeks' gestation significantly reduces the risk of adverse outcomes for babies.

Led by Mater Mothers' Hospitals' Senior Maternal Fetal Medicine Specialist Professor Sailesh Kumar and funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council and Mater Foundation, the study investigated the outcomes of 472,520 'low-risk' single-baby pregnancies in Queensland between 2000 and 2021.

It found that planned births at 39 weeks were associated with a 52 percent reduction in perinatal mortality

(stillbirth or neonatal death) and a notable decrease in severe neurological and non-neurological complications.

Prof Kumar emphasised the importance of these findings, while noting that further randomised trials on the timing and methods of planned birth were needed.

**"The finding of this very large observational study was that planned birth at this stage of pregnancy is associated with better perinatal and maternal outcomes," Prof Kumar said.**

**"However, these results should not be taken as unqualified support for routinely offering planned births, particular by c-section, at 39 weeks."**

Mater Mothers' Clinical Midwife Kieran Froese joined the podcast to share her insights into supporting families in informed decision-making around birth and why it is important to view the findings within the context of other research on optimal gestation periods.

### EARN CPD POINTS

Practitioners can download a certificate following each episode to support their professional development requirements.



## Australian-first clinic makes mothers' health a *priority*

Lauren Walsh and baby Roy

**Mater Mothers' Hospital has unveiled the 4Her Clinic, an initiative aimed at safeguarding the health of up to 2,000 vulnerable Queensland mothers each year, by monitoring their wellbeing in the critical first nine months of motherhood.**

The Australian-first clinic focuses on women who develop high blood pressure or diabetes during pregnancy and may now face long-term health risks.

**Women with high blood pressure during pregnancy are up to six times more likely to face cardiac issues, while those with gestational diabetes have a 50 percent chance of developing Type 2 diabetes.**

Associate Professor Jo Laurie, Mater's Clinical Director—Obstetric Medicine, said the clinic aims to set a new standard for maternal care across Australia.

"In the months after birth, the baby is the focus of everything, and mums often neglect their own health," she said.

"Until now, there has been a glaring gap in the health services provided to new mums.

**"People assume a woman's health returns to normal after birth, but that's not always the case."**

The 4Her Clinic assesses each woman's health at three and nine months postpartum, offering expert advice and connecting patients to specialist services as needed.

Lauren Walsh, a new mum from The Gap, was referred to the clinic after she developed pre-eclampsia while carrying her son, Roy.

"I want to reduce my cardiovascular risk in the long term, for my sake and for Roy's," she said.

Mater's 4Her Clinic was one of the beneficiaries of last year's Nine Telethon supporting Mater Little Miracles.



Lovepreet Kaur and baby Gurwaris Singh



# Understanding Mater's maternity *models of care*

More than 11,000 babies are born at Mater Mothers' Hospitals across Queensland each year.

Mater offers a number of models of care to its patients, to ensure women have choice when it comes to deciding how they are cared for during pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period.

## Private models of care

### Private Obstetrician **Statewide\***

Care provided by a private obstetrician with midwifery support in hospital. Private obstetricians can include solo and group practices, often with endorsed midwives engaged in their practice. A variety of births are supported, including spontaneous, caesarean, multiple births, Vaginal Birth After Caesarean (VBAC) and water births.

### My Mater Midwife **Brisbane**

Continuity of care with a dedicated midwife or group of midwives throughout pregnancy, birth, and postnatal period, working in collaboration with private obstetricians in solo or group practice.

### Hatch Private Maternity **Brisbane**

A low-cost model providing high-quality, private maternity care, with antenatal and postnatal appointments shared between endorsed midwives and obstetricians.

### Maternal Fetal Medicine **Brisbane**

Mater Mothers' world-class Centre for Maternal Fetal Medicine provides expert diagnosis and management of complex pregnancies for women with high-risk pregnancies in partnership with the woman's private obstetrician.

## Public models of care

### GP Shared Care **Statewide\***

Care shared between your GP and hospital midwives/obstetric teams. Ideal for low-risk pregnancies.

### Antenatal Clinic **Statewide\***

Specialised care, education, advice, and support from midwives throughout pregnancy, provided in partnership with hospital obstetric teams.

### Midwifery Group Practice **Brisbane**

Continuity of care with a small group of midwives throughout pregnancy, birth, and postnatal period. This is an all-risk model of care working in partnership with obstetric teams through consultation and referral and, when required, in collaboration with obstetric medicine specialists.

### Maternal Fetal Medicine (MFM) **Brisbane**

Mater Mothers' world-class Centre for Maternal Fetal Medicine provides expert diagnosis and management of complex pregnancies for women with high-risk pregnancies.

## Specialised midwifery clinics

Antenatal clinics are located at Mater Mothers' Hospital in South Brisbane, as well as through Mater's Community Clinics at Inala, Norman Park, Coorparoo and Brookwater.

### CHAMP Clinic

Support for women whose pregnancy may be affected by the use of recreational or prescription drugs, cigarettes or alcohol.

### Pregnancy After Loss Clinic

Support for women who have experienced the loss of a baby in their previous pregnancy.

### Obstetric Midwifery Group Practice

Mater Mother's Obstetric Midwifery Group Practice (OMGP) support women with known or new medical complications through a hybrid care model that combines a traditional midwifery group practice with an extra layer of obstetric care.

### Young Mothers' Partnership Program

Support for young pregnant women in a relaxed, informal atmosphere, with a focus on continuity of care throughout pregnancy and early parenthood.

### Refugee Midwifery Group Practice

Support for women from a refugee background, offering direct access to a midwife, pregnancy check-ups, support through labour and birth and up to six weeks postnatal care.

### CARE Clinics

Support for women with complex psychosocial or mental health history, based on continuity of care in partnership with a social work and psychology team.

### Preterm Birth Prevention Clinic

In line with the Australian Preterm Birth Prevention Alliance, this clinic aims to improve health outcomes for women and babies by continuing efforts to safely reduce preterm and early term births for at risk women. Women and their families receive continuity of care with a known midwife throughout their pregnancy.

### Birthing in Our Community (BiOC)

A partnership program between Mater, the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service Brisbane to provide culturally safe support services during pregnancy, birth and parenthood for Indigenous women.

\*Statewide refers to Mater Mothers' hospitals in Brisbane, Townsville, Mackay and Rockhampton only. Endorsed midwives work in collaboration with private obstetrician practices in Brisbane only.

# Meet our maternity experts

## South Brisbane



**Dr Megan Castner**  
Castner Mellor Obstetrics  
and Gynaecology  
☎ 07 3180 0048



**Dr Amy Mellor**  
Castner Mellor Obstetrics  
and Gynaecology  
☎ 07 3180 0048



**Dr Leanne Chaman**  
Castner Mellor Obstetrics  
and Gynaecology  
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**Dr Georgia Heathcote**  
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and Gynaecology  
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**Dr Robyn Aldridge**  
Eve Health  
☎ 07 3332 1999



**Dr Rob Butler**  
Eve Health  
☎ 07 3332 1999



**Dr Matt Smith**  
Eve Health  
☎ 07 3332 1999



**Dr Paul Conaghan**  
Eve Health  
☎ 07 3332 1999



**Dr Stephen Soong**  
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☎ 07 3332 1999



**Dr Kirstin Millard**  
Hatch Maternity  
☎ 07 3163 1688



**Dr Shannyn Rosser**  
Hatch Maternity  
☎ 07 3163 1688



**Dr Pranali Patel**  
Hatch Maternity  
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**Dr Will Milford**  
Kindred Midwifery, Obstetrics  
and Gynaecology  
☎ 07 3188 7915



**Dr Vincent Loh**  
Kindred Midwifery, Obstetrics  
and Gynaecology  
☎ 07 3188 7915



**Dr Kelly Van Den Haspel**  
Kindred Midwifery, Obstetrics  
and Gynaecology  
☎ 07 3188 7915



**Dr Caity Dallas**  
Kindred Midwifery, Obstetrics  
and Gynaecology  
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**Dr Lisa Harris**  
Maiden Health  
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**Dr Jill Cox**  
Maiden Health  
☎ 1300 624 336



**Dr Meghan Stafford**  
Maiden Health  
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**Dr Kellie Tathem**  
Queensland Fertility Group  
☎ 07 3015 3180



**Dr Julie Buchanan**  
Queensland Fertility Group  
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**Dr Kate Strawson**  
Queensland Fertility Group  
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**Dr Warrick Smith**  
☎ 07 3832 0247



**Dr Gabriel James**  
OBGYN Australia  
☎ 07 3844 9917



**Dr Charlotte Mooring**  
Bump & Beyond  
☎ 07 3145 0360



**Dr Anu Kaur**  
Aurora Women's Health  
☎ 07 3839 0552



**Dr Glenda McLaren**  
Bloom Women's Health  
☎ 07 3832 7399



**Dr Di Poad**  
River City Obstetric Group  
☎ 07 3839 1033



**Dr Melissa Luckensmeyer**  
River City Obstetric Group  
☎ 07 3839 1033



**Dr Josephine Cheung**  
☎ 07 3063 2188



**Dr Alex Alexander**  
My OBGYN  
☎ 07 3891 9333



**Dr Ajita Basu**  
☎ 07 3186 6673



**Dr Eva Kretowicz**  
☎ 07 3831 4090



**Dr Michael Mastry**  
Moreton Bay O&G  
☎ 07 3163 7362



**Dr Gillian Van Iddekinge**  
Moreton Bay O&G  
☎ 07 3163 7362



**Dr Matt MacBeth**  
Bayside Specialist Clinic  
☎ 07 3483 1415

### Key Mater facility contact:

**Mater Mothers' Private Hospital**  
**Mater Mothers' Hospital**  
Kerri Gane | General Manager  
✉ [kerri.gane@mater.org.au](mailto:kerri.gane@mater.org.au)



## Townsville



**Dr Sally Aubrey**  
Townsville Obstetrics  
and Gynaecology  
☎ 07 4721 3344



**Dr Kurinji Kannan**  
Uro-Gynaecology &  
Women's Health  
☎ 07 4771 6677



**Dr Cecelia O'Brien**  
Women's Health Circle  
☎ 07 4426 1870



**Dr Beata Peter-Przyborowska**  
Obstetrics & Gynaecology  
Clinic  
☎ 07 4772 0084



**Dr Renee Verkuijl**  
NQ Gynaecology  
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## Mackay



**Dr Naguesh  
Naik Gaunekar**  
☎ 07 4942 1199



**Dr Ritu Rana**  
Ritu Rana Medical  
☎ 07 4942 1199



**Dr Sally Rodrigues**  
☎ 07 4942 1199

## Rockhampton



**Dr Tanya Davenport**  
☎ 07 4882 0122



**Dr Ian Etherington**  
CQ Well Women  
☎ 07 4882 0122



**A/Prof David Shaker**  
☎ 07 4921 0013

### Key Mater facility contacts:

**Mater Mothers' Private Townsville**  
Rebekah Barrie  
Midwifery Unit Manager  
✉ [rebekah.barrie@mater.org.au](mailto:rebekah.barrie@mater.org.au)

**Mater Mothers' Private Mackay**  
Sarah Fordyce  
Midwifery Unit Manager  
✉ [sarah.fordyce@mater.org.au](mailto:sarah.fordyce@mater.org.au)

**Mater Mothers' Private Rockhampton**  
Di-Marie Dixon  
Midwifery Unit Manager  
✉ [di-marie.dixon@mater.org.au](mailto:di-marie.dixon@mater.org.au)

# Mater Mothers' First Aid *for Babies*



**Giving parents the confidence to care  
for a child in the event of an emergency.**

The two-and-a-half hour course is endorsed  
by leading neonatal critical care specialists and  
paediatricians working across Mater.

### Key areas of learning include:

- ✓ resuscitation (CPR)
- ✓ bleeding
- ✓ choking
- ✓ fractures
- ✓ poisoning
- ✓ allergic reactions
- ✓ burns
- ✓ respiratory illnesses.



RTO 5210

# Maternity support service *snapshot*

## Pregnancy Assessment Centre

**The Mater Mothers' Pregnancy Assessment Centre (PAC) in South Brisbane offers 24/7 care for women experiencing pregnancy-related complications from early pregnancy until six weeks postpartum.**

PAC provides urgent assessment and care, including access to specialist obstetricians, ultrasounds, and blood tests.

Managed by Mater midwives, PAC uses a triage system to prioritise care based on individual needs.

This service is free for women who are booked with, or plan to book with, a private obstetrician. Fees may otherwise apply.

## Neonatal Critical Care Unit

**Mater Mothers' Hospitals' Neonatal Critical Care Unit (NCCU) is one of Australia's largest and most advanced neonatal units, delivering 24/7 specialist care for up to 2,000 critically ill and premature babies each year.**

The unit supports infants requiring intensive medical, surgical, or cardiac care, including those born extremely preterm. GPs can refer patients expecting high-risk deliveries, with coordinated perinatal planning to ensure immediate access to expert neonatal care.

The NCCU also provides real-time support to Mater's regional facilities, enhancing continuity of care for families across Queensland, while maintaining seamless access for Brisbane-based patients.

## eConsultant

**Mater eConsultant provides GPs with timely specialist advice within three business days, focusing on various specialties, including obstetric medicine.**

For GPs with patients in regional areas, this service offers significant benefits by eliminating long travel times and reducing wait periods for specialist input. The platform supports secure messaging, ensuring efficient and documented communication.

This model enhances patient care by providing quick access to expert advice in obstetric medicine, which is particularly valuable for managing type 1 and 2 diabetes, gestational diabetes, hypertension and other complex medical conditions in pregnancy.

## Maternal Fetal Medicine Women's Imaging

**Mater Maternal Fetal Medicine Women's Imaging in South Brisbane offers comprehensive ultrasound services for both high-risk and low-risk pregnancies.**

Recognised internationally, the centre performs over 18,000 scans annually, using advanced 3D and 4D imaging technology. Services include early pregnancy assessments, nuchal translucency, morphology scans, and fetal therapy such as amniocentesis and fetal surgery. The centre collaborates with perinatal specialists and provides 24/7 access to specialist consultations and imaging services. GPs should refer patients needing detailed prenatal diagnostics or management of complex pregnancies to this specialised facility.





# Delivering better outcomes for Queensland mothers and babies

The 2025 Nine Telethon raised more than \$10 million for Mater Little Miracles, thanks to the generosity of communities, patients, and local businesses. These funds help the Mater Foundation to improve neonatal and maternal care across Queensland with advanced equipment, research, and support services.

## Enhancing care through technology

Foundation funds are supporting vital upgrades in Mater's Neonatal Critical Care Unit and maternity services:

- **MFM ultrasound machine:** Performs 18,000+ scans annually using 3D/4D imaging for early fetal assessment.
- **Neonatal incubators:** Provides controlled environments for critically ill newborns, supporting development and stability.
- **Telehealth (Teladoc):** Enables real-time remote specialist input for complex obstetric cases, improving access in regional areas.

## Driving research in maternal and neonatal health

Mater Foundation is funding research to improve pregnancy and early life outcomes:

- **Placental biomarkers:** Identifying fetuses at risk of growth restriction and stillbirth.
- **Nutritional interventions:** Studying choline and folate to reduce effects of prenatal alcohol exposure.
- **Genetic research:** Exploring 'jumping genes' linked to infertility and pregnancy loss.
- **Chronic disease in pregnancy:** Improving management of conditions like asthma to reduce complications.

## Supporting families in difficult times

Beyond clinical care, the Foundation funds compassionate support services:

- **Bereavement support:** Training clinicians to provide sensitive care to grieving families.
- **Mission Fund:** Offering urgent financial aid to vulnerable patients and families.

## The dangers of prenatal alcohol exposure

**A new Mater Research study has confirmed that alcohol consumption, even just prior to conception, can impact placental development.**

The study, led by Mater Research Pregnancy and Development Group Leader Professor Vicki Clifton, studied more than 400 Australian women who had and had not consumed alcohol at the time of conception.

"The take home message from everything that we've done so far in the study really

is to support the guidelines that if you're thinking about having a baby, don't drink alcohol," Professor Clifton said.

Mater Research's Dr Sarah Steane said the recently published study is one of the first to analyse doppler ultrasound measurements of placental function in relation to alcohol consumption.

"In the group of women that reported consuming alcohol, our key finding is that there were some alterations in doppler ultrasound measurements," Dr Steane said.

"These measurements indicated that the placenta may not be performing as it should in delivering oxygen to the baby."

Of the women in the study who had consumed alcohol around the time of conception, one in six had ultrasound placenta measurements suggestive of deficient placenta function, compared

to one in 45 women who had not consumed alcohol.

**This suggests that women who drink alcohol around the time of conception are nine times more likely to have affected placenta development compared to those who don't consume alcohol.**

However, the research team also found that women who took the recommended amount of folic acid prior to conception and during the first trimester of pregnancy were less likely to have these abnormal ultrasound measurements.

## Work begins on *Townsville's* new maternity ward

**Mater Private Hospital Townsville has celebrated a milestone in the development of its new purpose-built maternity ward at its Pimlico campus.**

Construction has begun—following a ceremonial sod-turning and site blessing—with the new facility due to open early next year.

It will feature 12 inpatient beds for new mums, as well as three birthing suites, six special care nursery cots and a dedicated maternity patient lounge.

Obstetrician Dr Beata Peter-Przyborowska said it demonstrates Mater's commitment to delivering high-quality maternity care in North Queensland.

**"This really puts the women and families we care for at the heart of maternity care, by ensuring they have access to contemporary and compassionate maternity care, throughout pregnancy, birth and early parenthood,"**  
Dr Peter-Przyborowska said.

Maternity services will continue operating from the Hyde Park Campus until the new facilities open in early 2026.



### How to refer

**Dr Beata Peter-Przyborowska**  
Obstetrics and Gynaecology  
Clinic Townsville

 Referrals via Medical Objects

 (07) 4772 0084

 [beata@obs-gyn.com.au](mailto:beata@obs-gyn.com.au)

 [Referral information](#)

## Birth suite revamp in Mackay

**The birth suites at Mater Mothers' Private Mackay are about to undergo a major refurbishment, for the first time in 20 years.**

The revamped suites will include the addition of water immersion baths for women in labour to use as pain relief, as well as a number of personal touches aimed at making the hospital experience feel more like home.

Midwifery Unit Manager Sarah Fordyce says the changes will benefit the mothers of the 450-plus babies born at Mater Mother's Private Mackay each year.

**"Our priority is to ensure every mum and family has a positive birthing experience,"** Ms Fordyce said.

**"Having new, contemporary facilities that respond to patient needs and wishes will greatly enhance the comfort and care we provide."**

The refurbishments are expected to be finished next year.

## New Mater leadership in Rockhampton

**Allison Cassidy has been appointed General Manager, Mater Private Hospital Rockhampton.**

An accomplished healthcare leader, Allison has a wealth of experience across executive and senior roles in tertiary and regional public hospital facilities in Australia. She brings extensive knowledge of the hospital and healthcare sector in Rockhampton, most recently serving as the General Manager for the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service.

**Allison's first day with Mater will be 23 June 2025.**



L-R: Mater Private Hospital Townsville General Manager Stephanie Barwick, Bishop of Townsville Reverend Timothy Harris, Queensland Senator Nita Green, and Mater Board Chair Patrick Brady.



# Mater Mothers' Springfield takes shape

Mater Springfield will meet the future health needs of the rapidly growing Greater Springfield region.

**In less than a year, Mater Mothers' Springfield will welcome mothers, babies and their families to its new, purpose-built birthing and maternity facility.**

The state-of-the-art project is currently under construction, alongside Mater Private Hospital Springfield, and is the result of a landmark partnership between Mater and the Queensland Government.

**Mater Mothers' Springfield is expected to deliver approximately 1,700 public babies each year, and support families living across the Western corridor.**

Continuity of care will remain a priority, with antenatal care expected to be available to expectant mothers early next year.

At this stage, GP referrals will open early next year. Mater will provide an update on the referral process closer to this time.

## Facility features

The new birthing and maternity facility will include:

- 16 maternity beds
- Six birth suites
- 16 special care neonatal cots
- Pregnancy Assessment Centre

## Mater empowers regional midwives

**Midwives working in country hospitals across Queensland are now getting a helping hand from their big city sisters.**

More than 50 midwives from remote and regional hospitals are undergoing placements at Brisbane's Mater Mothers' Hospitals to hone their clinical skills through the Strength with Immersion Model (SwIM) program.

**This initiative is a partnership between Mater and Queensland Health, and allows rural midwives to gain rapid experience in complex areas.**

Mater midwife and SwIM Program Coordinator Penny Musumeci said the program has enabled maternity staff to refresh and maintain their skills in a tertiary hospital, so that regional mothers and babies are healthy and cared for close to their home and community.

Midwives from Weipa to Warwick have benefitted from the program.



Mater midwife and SwIM Program Coordinator Penny Musumeci (right) with participant Melissa Botha.



# Introducing *Calm and Connected*



## Catherine's House, Queensland's first integrated perinatal mental health centre, has launched a new private day program called *Calm and Connected*.

It is designed to provide essential support for parents and caregivers of babies under six months old.

**The comprehensive four-part program aims to equip participants with the confidence, tools and support needed to navigate the challenges of early parenthood.**

Facilitated by specialist perinatal mental health clinicians, *Calm and*

*Connected* draws on evidence-based approaches, including mindfulness, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Attachment Theory.

The program is tailored for parents and caregivers who are experiencing:

- Perinatal mental health challenges, such as low mood and anxiety
- Difficulties bonding with their baby
- Struggles in coping with change, adjustment to parenthood and managing challenging emotions
- Low-esteem and a lack of self-compassion or self-care
- A need for support in developing their parenting style.

Participants will meet with a psychiatrist at Catherine's House for an initial appointment before joining the small-group sessions. Parents are encouraged to bring their babies to the program.

### ? How to refer

#### Catherine's House

☎ (07) 3163 2299

✉ [ch.mbf@mater.org.au](mailto:ch.mbf@mater.org.au)

➔ [Referral information](#)



## Meet Dr Annie Fonda

### General Practitioner Dr Annie Fonda has joined the team at Catherine's House, offering specialised support for new and expecting parents.

With more than 20 years of experience, she provides evidence-based care for various concerns, including pre-existing anxiety and depression, birth trauma, OCD, relationship difficulties, attachment challenges and adjusting to new family dynamics. Dr Fonda uses a holistic approach, incorporating therapies like Eye Movement Desensitisation Reprocessing (EMDR), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), and Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) to help patients build

### ? How to refer

**Dr Annie Fonda**  
Catherine's House  
Private Practice

☎ (07) 3163 2584

✉ [ch.private@mater.org.au](mailto:ch.private@mater.org.au)

➔ [Referral information](#)



## Milestone neonatology appointment

**Professor Ju-Lee Oei has commenced her role as the inaugural Chair of Neonatology at Mater, where she is working across Mater Mothers' Hospitals and Mater Research.**

Prof Oei, formerly a neonatologist at the Royal Hospital for Women in Sydney, brings extensive expertise in neonatal resuscitation and care for families affected by drug dependency.

She is also the chief investigator of two multi-centre trials on oxygen use in newborns and has contributed to national and international guidelines on neonatal care.

**Mater Research Executive Director Professor Allison Pettit said Prof Oei's appointment was a significant milestone in Mater's goal to be recognised as the national leader in neonatal research and clinical care for mothers and babies.**

"Following an international search, it was clear that Ju-Lee is the best

candidate for this role and will bring complimentary expertise to expand research and clinical capacity at Mater," Prof Pettit said.

"Her expertise will drive major advancements in neonatal research and clinical practice, enhancing Mater's reputation as a world leader in mother and baby health."

The new role is supported by Mater Foundation through the Nine Telethon for Mater Little Miracles.



Prof Ju-Lee Oei started as Mater's Chair of Neonatology in May

## Congratulations Professor Helen Liley

**Professor Helen Liley, a globally respected neonatologist with more than 35 years of experience, has been awarded the prestigious College Medal by the Royal Australasian College of Physicians.**

Her career has taken her around the world, from the United States to New Zealand, and, for the past 25 years, she has been at Mater.

As a clinician-scientist, her contributions have been wide-ranging, and included basic biology of lung development,

exploration of new innate immune pathways, epidemiologic studies and leadership in major clinical trials to improve neonatal care.

**In addition to this, Prof Liley has contributed to the development of blood product guidelines for babies and children, as well as helped shape global resuscitation guidelines in her role as Chair of the International Liaison Committee of Resuscitation (ILCOR) Neonatal Life Support Task Force.**

Mater Research Executive Director Allison Pettit has praised her as a driving force in neonatal excellence.



Prof Helen Liley's work has made a huge difference for babies at Mater and beyond.

## Our Mater Network

Operating the largest not-for-profit network of public and private hospital and healthcare services in the state, Mater brings together collective expertise across health, education, and research, with a shared vision of empowering people to live better lives through improved health and wellbeing.

**Mater Health** comprises all our hospitals and healthcare services across Queensland. These services combine to help Mater offer comprehensive healthcare which meets identified community need.

**Mater Education** is a nationally accredited, hospital-based independent Registered Training Organisation—the only one of its kind in Queensland. It offers a range of courses for students, through to highly experienced practising clinicians.

**Mater Research** is an internationally recognised leader in medical research, which connects its findings from bench to bedside—translating medical research into clinical practice to deliver better outcomes for our patients and the wider community.

**Mater Foundation** raises funds by engaging people and businesses to partner with Mater to improve health through a wide range of fundraising and philanthropy.



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