

MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW FEDERAL STILLBIRTH SUPPORT TO ENSURE MORE HEALTHY PREGNANCIES IN AUSTRALIA

Stillbirth Foundation Australia and the National Centre for Research Excellence in Stillbirth (Stillbirth CRE) have today welcomed the Federal Government's maternity bundle of care funding.

Funded through the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), the grant will work to deliver better support to pregnant women and ensure more healthy births.

Stillbirth Foundation Australia CEO, Kate Lynch, said the bundle of care will work to save more lives and ensure families get the information they need, when they need it most.

"With six children stillborn every day in Australia, we need to more effectively support families when they need it," Ms Lynch said.

"At the moment, there are key things about the stillbirth that we are simply not telling expectant mothers, this package will start to change that."

The maternity bundle of care will work to reduce the stillbirth rate by improving routine clinical care around five key elements of maternity care which are:

- Detection and management of fetal growth restriction.
- Awareness and management of decreased fetal movement.
- Support for women to stop smoking.
- Awareness of maternal safe sleeping position.
- Decision-making around timing of birth for women with risk factors.

Ms Lynch said that by better communicating with families about the risks of stillbirths we can ensure more healthy pregnancies in Australia.

"In the past there has been too much inconsistency in the delivery of this vital information, but by standardising these elements of maternity care we can improve this for families into the future."

Mater researcher and Director of the Stillbirth CRE, Professor Vicki Flenady said the maternity bundle of care will improve clinical practice and provide better support for women and families.

"This is all about upscaling elements of care that are well-accepted practices in stillbirth prevention, but due to lack of focussed attention there are significant gaps," Professor Flenady said.

"Our aim is to bridge these gaps by ensuring clinicians, women, their partners and their support networks in the community are aware of the importance of these elements and steps they can take to reduce the risk."

To find out more about Stillbirth Foundation Australia visit: www.stillbirthfoundation.org.au

To find out more about the Stillbirth CRE visit: www.stillbirthcre.org.au

Media contact: Nick Trainor 0407 078 138