

MATERNITY SERVICES INTER-JURISDICTIONAL COMMITTEE

WHAT IS THE MATERNITY SERVICES INTER-JURISDICTIONAL COMMITTEE (MSIJC)?

The MSIJC (formerly National Collaboration on Maternity Services Policy) was established by the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC) as an information-sharing network of representatives from States and Territories with the principal objective of promoting primary maternity services. MSIJC reports to AHMAC through the Health Policy Priorities Principal Committee.

A key focus for this group is the development of nationally consistent approaches to the provision of primary maternity care.

WHAT INITIATIVES HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN BY MSIJC?

As a first step in promoting consistency in approaches to the provision of primary maternity care across States and Territories, MSIJC developed a Jurisdictional Statement of Commitment to implementing and extending Primary Maternity Services. This statement articulates a set of commonly agreed principles underpinning provision of primary maternity care. These principles relate to:

- high quality care enabled by evidence-based practice
- care is coordinated according to the woman's clinical need
- health professionals work together in a collaborative multidisciplinary approach
- continuity of care
- woman-centred care which gives women a sense of control of their birthing experience
- care is culturally appropriate and reduces health inequalities
- continued access to best practice care at the local level.

The current MSIJC work plan comprises five projects targeted to increase the capacity of jurisdictions to give effect to these principles:

- 1. Definition of core competencies and development of an educational framework for maternity service providers.** This is a joint project between the MSIJC and the Health Workforce Taskforce. A consultant has recently been appointed to undertake the project which will involve detailed engagement with all maternity services/professions.
 - 2. Documentation of a framework for implementation of primary maternity services in Australia.** This document expands on the principles that underpin the MSIJC's work by providing concrete examples from all jurisdictions of how these principles are reflected in existing service models.
 - 3. Development of the National Evidence Based Guidelines for Antenatal Care.** Stage 1 of this project was commissioned by the Child Health and Wellbeing Subcommittee of the Australian Population Health Development Principal Committee (APHDPC) and undertaken by a consortium led by Women's Hospitals Australasia. Stage 2 involves the development of the previous guidelines under the auspice of the National Health and Medical Research Council. An expert Advisory Committee has been convened to direct the guideline development. The MSIJC is now a co-sponsor of this project.
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- 4. Establish a core set of national maternity care performance indicators.** The Information for Quality Maternity Care Project is funded by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC). The MJISC has contributed to a draft set of indicators, and is now working with the ACSQHC to consider how the indicators should be piloted and subsequently implemented in a national framework to measure outcomes of perinatal care.
- 5. Data definitions in accordance with National Health Information Agreement (NHIA) arrangements.** The aim of this project is to ensure national data supports implementation of performance benchmarks, ensure data definitions enable appropriate and valid data collection, support electronic maternity records by ensuring specific and clear definitions and to provide national data on primary maternity care. It is expected that this project will be delivered as part of the core indicators pilot above.

The current membership of the MSIJC is:

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