

Maternity Services

Update - September 2017



Maternity services update

Queensland Health continually strives to provide the best possible maternity services for mothers and babies and since 2016 we've undertaken a number of key system-wide improvement activities. This update details the progress we've made to date in delivering safer and higher quality maternity services and care.

Growing demand

Number of mothers in Queensland

1998 **47,450***

2002 **48,324***

2006 **55,719***

2010 **61,027***

2014 **62,811***



* Includes public and private facilities, home births and born before arrivals.

Source: Queensland Perinatal data collection 1997-2015





Continual improvement in quality and safety

A Statewide Maternity Services Forum was held on 15 November 2016 which focused on identifying actions which could be applied across the health system to improve the quality and outcomes for mothers and babies in public maternity services. In addition to discussing the needs and expectations of Indigenous mothers, the forum identified three key themes to be investigated in order to improve public maternity services including:

1. collaborative leadership culture within services
2. improving the reliability of identification and management of risk in pregnancy
3. models of care and workforce.

An action group was established to address each theme, with group leaders meeting in March 2017 to determine their scopes and programs of work until June 2018. This work included:

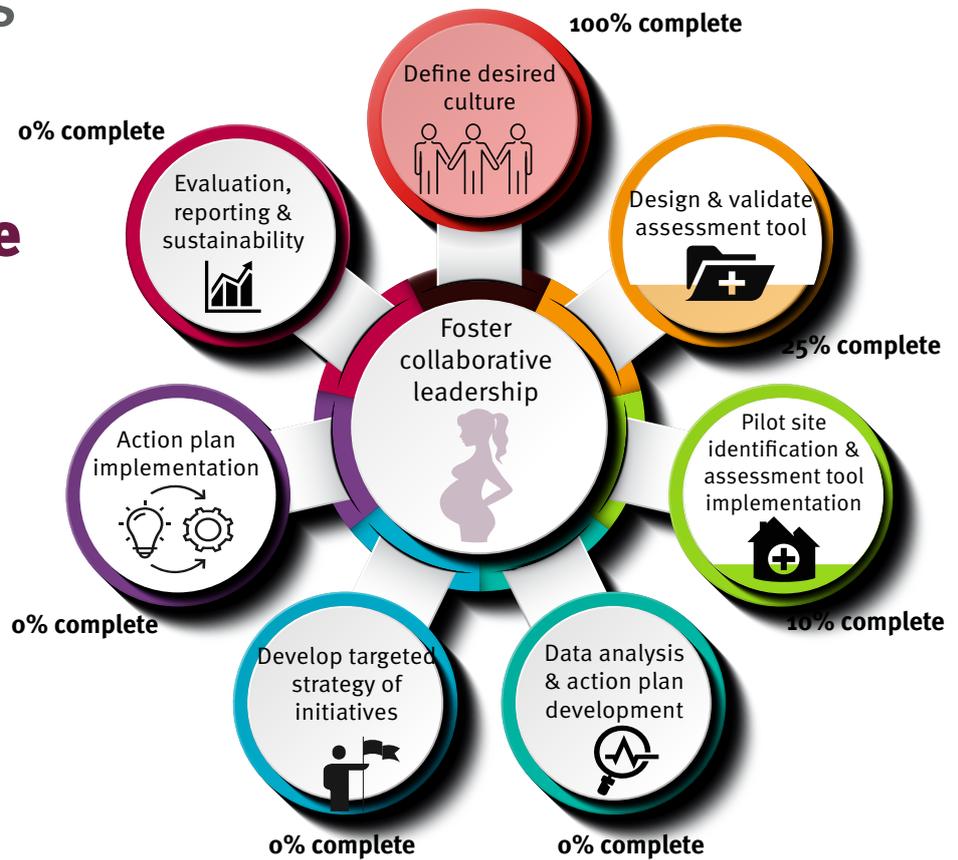
1. developing a culture and leadership self-assessment tool
2. identifying best-practice recommendations for antenatal education
3. reviewing risk-assessment and decision-support tools
4. identifying a core suite of maternity indicators
5. identifying strategies to support birthing facilities to implement continuity-of-carer models of care.

The progress of the action groups in delivering these Statewide improvement projects is overseen and driven by the Maternity Services Forum Steering Committee. This committee was formed by the Department of Health alongside key partners including the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG), the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP), Australian College of Midwives (ACM), consumers and Hospital and Health Services (HHSs).

Maternity Services Action Group 1 – Collaborative leadership culture

This action group is responsible for:

1. defining desired or aspirational culture
2. developing, piloting and evaluating a tool for maternity services to self-assess against culture, leadership and care criteria
3. developing individual actions plans and improvement initiatives for the pilot maternity services sites to achieve desired culture.



Maternity Services Action Group 2 – Identification and management of risk in pregnancy

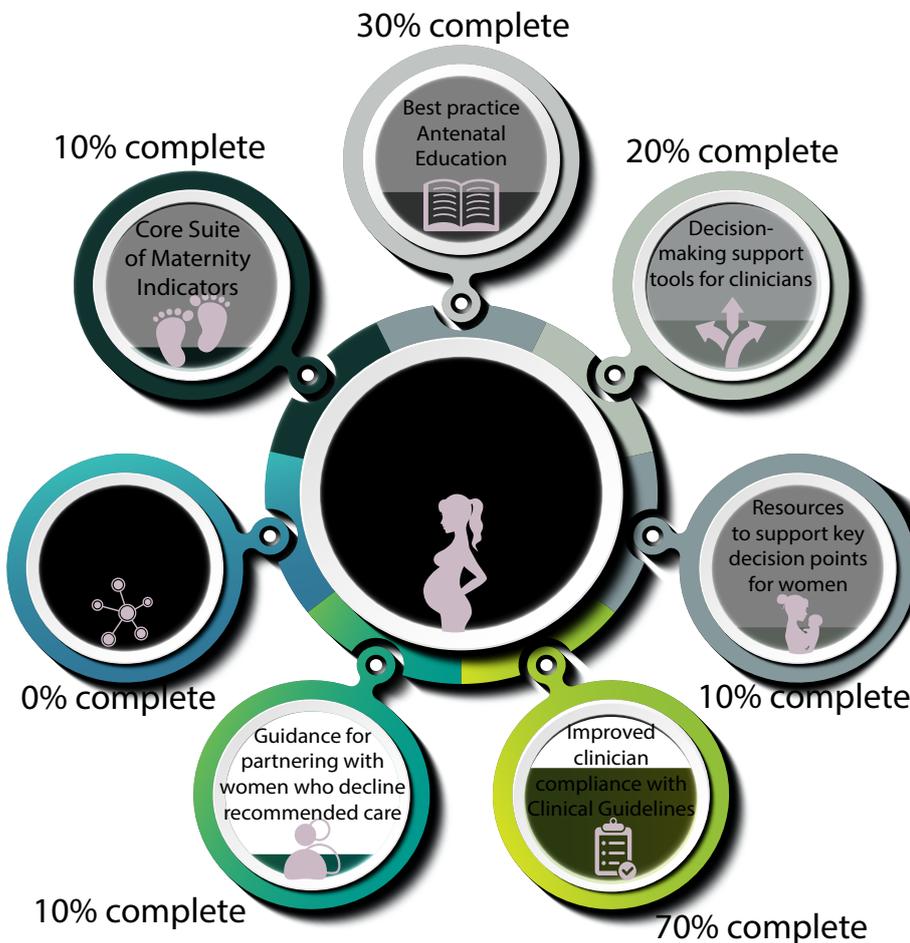
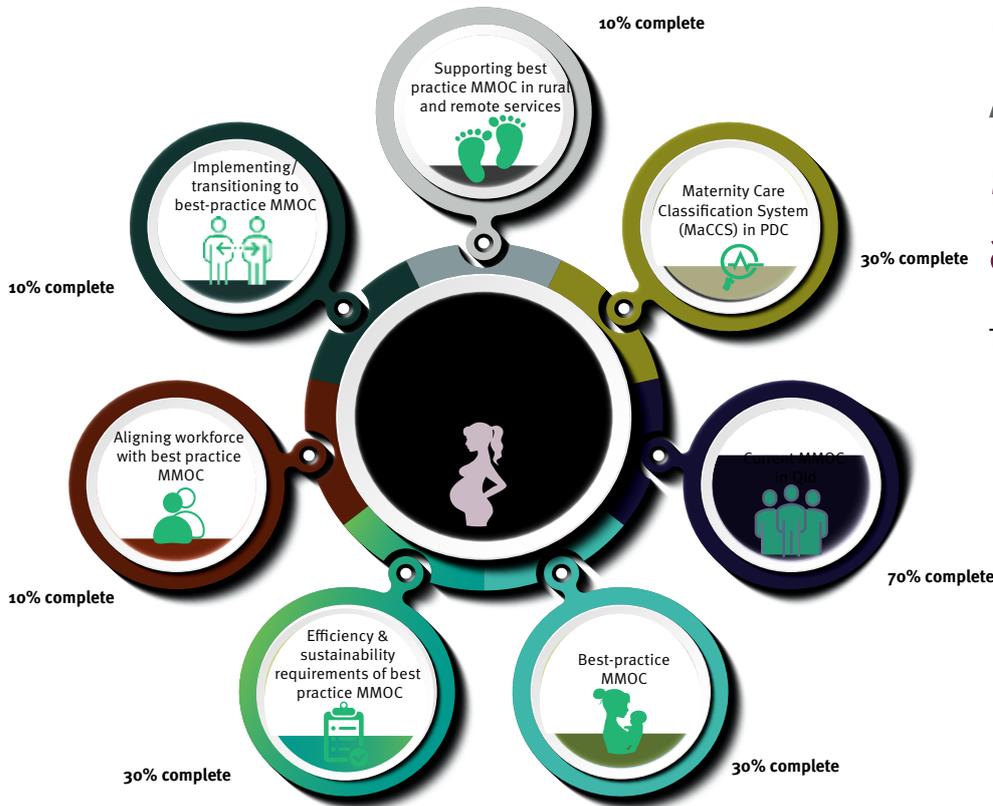
This action group is responsible for:

1. identifying best practice antenatal education and developing recommendations for antenatal education
2. developing new / refining existing clinician decision-making tools
3. developing new / refining existing key decision-making tools for women
4. determining strategies to increase clinician compliance with clinical guidelines
5. developing a guidance document for partnering with women who decline recommended care
6. facilitating the establishment of regional peer-support meetings and networks
7. identifying core maternity indicators for clinicians and consumers.

Maternity Services Action Group 3 – Models of care and workforce

This action group is responsible for

1. identifying current maternity models of care across Queensland
2. ensuring best practice maternity model of care is aligned with and supported by Clinical Services Capability Framework levels
3. identifying tools to assist HHSs in aligning workforce with recommended maternity model of care
4. identifying collaboration, communications and cultural components that support transition to and maintenance of continuity-of-carer models.





Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander maternity forum

To further explore issues specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers, the ‘Growing Deadly Families: a healthy start for mums and bubs’ forum was held on 3 August 2017.

The forum allowed discussion with a specific focus on the needs and expectations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, where additional key opportunities for improvement were identified for consideration at a local level and by the Department of Health. The three high-level themes identified during the day on improving maternity services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women and their families were:

- continuity of care
- partnerships for governance and leadership
- embedding Indigenous workforce and support into health services.

At the close of the forum, identifying that the most powerful change comes from individuals on the ground, delegates were challenged to deliver improvements within their own control at the local level. The Department of Health and its partners also agreed to consider strategies that could be implemented within the healthcare system, such as the removal of barriers to support pathways for the indigenous workforce and supporting genuine partnerships for governance.

Note: This forum preceded a meeting of the Queensland Clinical Senate held on 4 August 2017 where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health issues were discussed in the context of the Clinical Senate agenda ‘A Great Start’.



Midwifery staffing levels

In January 2017, a Statewide Business Planning Framework Midwifery Workforce Audit of midwifery staffing levels at all public maternity units in Queensland was announced. This audit was established to ensure that there are safe and sustainable workloads for our midwives and to determine the current number of full-time equivalent midwives working within our public maternity hospitals. In 2015-2016, nurses and midwives cared for 45,673 babies and their mothers in Queensland public maternity services. The outcomes of this audit will help us ensure that our midwifery workforce has the right skills and sufficient time to deliver safe and effective care to mothers and babies into the future.

The Office of the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer will coordinate this audit with Pricewaterhouse Coopers, who in turn will work alongside Queensland's HHSs. The final report is scheduled for completion in September 2017.



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