

THE FIRST 2000 DAYS

The first 2000 days of life, from pre-conception through to starting school, are a critical window of opportunity. A focus on the key priorities during this time, can have enormous impact on the health and potential of our community, our health system sustainability, and equity of healthcare access and outcomes throughout a lifetime.

Recommendations

1. Whole of Government

That Queensland Health take an enhanced leadership role in First 2000 Days matters at the whole of government level, in partnership with other government departments



2. Partnerships

Recognise that strong partnerships are essential across the system in the First 2000 Days. Strong partnerships require formal linkages, shared goals, planning, decision making and funding.



8. Governance

Clarify and strengthen the governance and authorising environment for child health in Queensland, including policy, standards and quality assurance across all relevant sectors in Queensland, that is integrated with other First 2000 Days governance areas.

9, 10 & 11. Supporting Parents

9. Increase awareness, support for referral, and access to preventive health and other support programs for parents, with equitable access across the state. Recognising the health & wellbeing of the child, in the context of the health and wellbeing of the family across the first 2000 days



3. Before the beginning

Improve pre-conception care for both parents, by developing and promoting, accessible pre-conception care Queensland Clinical Guidelines and consumer information.

6-7. Child Health

6. Improve child health processes

- Ensure that every Queensland child has access to the required (as per the Queensland Personal Health Record - Red Book) child health checks (including oral health checks) within the First 2000 Days, in a culturally safe way.
- Transition to an opt-out system for child health checks in Queensland (e.g. active engagement and automatic offer of checks for all children)
- Provide system level assurance that child health checks are completed for Queensland children, with associated key performance indicators.
- Clarify governance and coordination roles and processes for child health checks, and ensure these are incorporated into child health policy and standards in Queensland

10. Improve postnatal mental health treatment, care and support

- Greater linkages between perinatal / child health services and mental health services, with improved overall access to mental healthcare.
- Improved access to postnatal mental health admitted care (mother and baby acute inpatient care), where required

11. Incorporate active engagement and co-designed improvement processes in the context of missed appointments (for children and other vulnerable groups) to address access barriers for consumers, based on increasing understanding and support.

4. The early days

Support and develop integrated place-based services* that include integrated maternity, child health & family hubs as they relate to the First 2000 Days. Integrated place-based services* should include:

- Strong community co-design and partnership
- Continuity of midwifery care
- Culturally safe care
- Wrap around health and community services
- Acknowledging each rural and remote community has a different range and mix of services available.

12. Supporting staff and consumers

Ensure Queensland Health is a trusted source of staff and consumer information, education, training and support for the First 2000 Days, in partnership with other credible information and education providers.

- Develop and support training and a common language as it relates to the First 2000 Days, for all Queensland Government staff
- Support promotional activities including public messaging
- Ensure materials are co-designed with consumers, healthcare providers and care partners that is accessible, particularly for vulnerable groups
- Improve understanding of the benefits of antenatal, post-natal and child healthcare.
- Provide wellbeing support for staff working in the First 2000 Days

5. Postnatal care

Improve and standardise postnatal care processes between maternity and child health services

- Ensure handover from maternity to child health services is automatically offered to all parents in Queensland.
- Ensure all Queenslanders have access to adequate post-natal care in-home visits, based on need.
- Ensure all Queenslanders understand where additional post-natal care support can be accessed.

7. Recording of health checks within the First 2000 Days

- Digitise the pregnancy health record and child health record, incorporating a consumer portal.
- Ensure digital information follows the patient journey and is sharable between care partners (subject to privacy provisions).
- Consolidate data for the collection, reporting and benchmarking of child health checks to inform service delivery and quality assurance in Queensland.
- Align maternity and child health check digital processes and data collection with national processes where possible.

13 & 14. Action planning

13. Support the scale and spread of First 2000 Days programs that:

- Are co-designed with consumers and care partners
- Include strong partnerships and / or inter-agency collaboration
- Meet the Quintuple Aim
- Are place based and integrated
- Have measurable short and long-term outcomes / benefits, that include consumer designed measures of success.

14. Develop a Health Action Plan or Health Response for the First 2000 Days as a subset of an existing whole of government strategy.