



22 June 2015

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **NAMBOUR BIRTH SERVICES**

Maternity Choices Australia is deeply concerned at the prospect of women losing maternity services at Nambour Hospital. We have been contacted by a group of concerned consumers in the Sunshine Coast region regarding the closure of their birthing services at Nambour once the construction of the new hospital at Kawana is completed.

In 2010, the Federal and all State and Territory Health Ministers signed the National Maternity Services Plan (NMSP). The commitment of this plan is to provide continuity of care to all women in Australia. Priority one of the plan is for access – increasing women's access by expanding the range of models of care.

The Nambour site could be run as a midwifery-led unit with consultation and referral, where required, to the new hospital in Kawana. This model was run in Mareeba successfully for many years. For evidence of this please refer to Kruske et.al. (2014) paper, titled: "A retrospective, descriptive study of maternal and neonatal transfers, and clinical outcomes of a Primary Maternity Unit in rural Queensland, 2009–2011" Women could have access to 100% continuity of care and thus fulfilling the goal that was set in 2010 by signing of the NMSP.

Kidea et.al (Babies born before arrival to hospital and maternity unit closures in Queensland and Australia, 2015) also found that, "Evidence suggests the closure of maternity units is associated with an increase in babies born before arrival".

We understand that the women of the Sunshine Coast are very distressed at the proposal being set forth for closure of their services and we will support them in lobbying for the services to remain open.

Contact: Leah Hardiman 0427 474 099 [president@maternitychoices.org.au](mailto:president@maternitychoices.org.au)