

Key facts

The **Gateway Health Endorsed Midwife Care Program** is a **community-based, midwife-led** program which provides **antenatal and postnatal services** to pregnant people and families in the **Albury Wodonga** region.

The program **fills a service gap in the regional community**. It works with pregnant people from **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island backgrounds** and **refugee and culturally diverse backgrounds** who have settled in the area. The program also works with pregnant people who experience **family and domestic violence, mental health challenges, alcohol and other drug issues, and homelessness**.

What the evaluation involved

- A **file audit and economic analysis** evaluated the program's safety, effectiveness, and economic value.
- **Maternal and neonatal episode costs** were sourced from the Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority, National Hospital Cost Data Collection.
- **Interviews and focus groups** with participants, and **surveys** with referrers explored the acceptability and experiences of those who access the service.



Evaluation of Gateway Health's Endorsed Midwife Care Program

Who participated in the evaluation



55

FILES

of **pregnant people** who had already taken part in the program



7

HEALTH STAFF

(e.g. **doctors, midwives**) who refer pregnant people to the program



15

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The evaluation was a **partnership** between



Charles Sturt
University

gateway
health
People living well



MONASH
University

Economic evaluation found the program was

**LESS COSTLY THAN
MAINSTREAM
MATERNITY CARE**

\$1,216 saved per birth
(average across all births)

\$1,216

**MORE EFFECTIVE
THAN MAINSTREAM
MATERNITY CARE**

**25 additional infants born
over 2.5 kg per 1000 births**

25



Gateway Health Endorsed Midwife Care Program compared to the national average



PRE-TERM BIRTHS

Lower rates of pre-term births
(4.8% vs 8.4%)



BIRTH WEIGHT

Lower rates of low-birth-weight infants
(4.8% vs 6.6%)



CAESAREAN SECTIONS

Lower rates of caesarean sections
(26.2% vs 40.6%)



NORMAL VAGINAL BIRTHS

Higher rates of normal vaginal births
(61.9% vs 48.4%)



BREASTFEEDING RATES

Higher breastfeeding rates at hospital discharge
(81% vs 74.1%)



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What participants said about the program



It didn't feel like every time it was a new person starting again. Then I was able to trust a lot more because you didn't have your walls up with a new person every single time.



I would say [the midwife's] overall holistic approach, and non-judgemental approach, like the way that she communicated really solidified that there is no wrong question, or wrong feeling.



And they're not telling you, 'oh this, the way you do it back home [in Africa] is not good'. So, here they still respect you with your belief system.



They explain to you how the pregnancy will go, everything you may experience during your pregnancy. So that makes me feel more safe because if someone tells you, 'you may experience this and it's normal', then if it happens to me, I'll be like 'oh, it's normal'.

What referrers said about the program



There is nowhere else for some of these women to go. Mostly because of the cost. This service really helps those women who are high risk and low SES.



This service fills a very important gap in this community. If the service was no longer there, there would be a huge gap in the pregnancy services in the area. I think it would result in a significant increase in women turning up to clinics or having to give birth at 35+ weeks having had no pregnancy related care or advice, in particular refugee women and those using drugs and alcohol.