



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

26 March 2004

### **More beds and staff for mums and babies in southwest**

**More beds, extra senior staff and the establishment of a comprehensive Maternal and Perinatal Service network have been recommended for South Western Sydney Area Health Service (SWSAHS) following a review led by the State's leading neonatologist Professor David Henderson-Smart.**

Prof Henderson-Smart, the director of the NSW Pregnancy and Newborn Services Network, said the key recommendation was to establish an Area-wide Maternal and Perinatal Service.

"This new way of providing care across SWSAHS would be backed up by extra beds and new staff appointments including a director of the Maternal and Perinatal Service," he said.

Obstetrician Dr Rajat Gyaneshwar was today appointed acting director of SWSAHS Maternal and Perinatal Service.

Dr Gyaneshwar will provide clinical leadership across SWSAHS in implementing the review team's recommendations.

Nursing unit manager of Fairfield Hospital's Delivery Suite Karen Sorensen is the new acting director of Midwifery for the area health service.

"These roles will develop and implement strategies to improve the integration, consistency and quality of maternal and perinatal services," Prof Henderson-Smart said.

Other major recommendations include:

- 4 more high-level (level 5) neonatal cots totalling 12 at Liverpool Hospital – an extra 3 ventilated cots and one non-ventilator cot
- 4 to 6 more beds at Liverpool Hospital to cater for women with more complicated pregnancies
- 2 to 4 extra maternity beds at Bankstown Hospital, and
- Investigate a greater range of models of maternity care across the Area, such as midwifery-led teams and birth centres.

Prof Henderson-Smart's report recommends the introduction of Area-wide medical appointments for maternal and perinatal services.

New positions include:

- An Area-wide director Maternal and Perinatal Service who would be a fulltime professor of Obstetrics based at Liverpool Hospital
- An Area-wide director of Midwifery
- An Area-wide clinical nurse consultant of Midwifery
- Three more specialists to Liverpool Hospital's Maternal-Fetal Medicine Unit
- A medical academic specialising in obstetric anaesthesia for the new Area service
- A staff specialist in Obstetrics and Gynaecology as the director of Maternal and Perinatal Services at Fairfield Hospital, and
- Additional midwifery, specialist nursing and allied health staff.

The recommendations are the result of an eight-week intensive investigation of maternal and perinatal services in Sydney's southwest encompassing Liverpool, Bankstown, Fairfield, Campbelltown, Camden and Bowral hospitals.

The expert panel wants to see Liverpool Hospital, a teaching hospital of the University of NSW, at the hub of the network providing the core critical and acute maternity and neonatal care for the southwest.

Campbelltown and Bankstown hospitals would continue to provide services for medium-risk mothers and babies.

Camden and Bowral hospitals would remain as centres for normal risk births along with Fairfield Hospital which would refer high risk births to Liverpool Hospital.

Prof Henderson-Smart said it was crucial to the success of the network that patients and the community participate in its development.

He said the network would develop and implement Area-wide standardised criteria and protocols to ensure services are provided at an appropriate level of care, and in accordance with approved role delineations, to meet the diverse needs of women and babies.

"Education programs will ensure all staff are supported to acquire and maintain the level of skills required to provide appropriate services, including the resuscitation of neonatal infants and responding to obstetric emergencies," Prof Henderson-Smart said.

**Issued by Public Affairs, South Western Sydney Area Health Service 9828 5700**