



PMMRC

THE PERINATAL AND MATERNAL MORTALITY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Issue 1 NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2007

This is the first newsletter of the Perinatal and Maternal Mortality Review Committee (PMMRC). We hope that this will help keep clinicians up to date with what we are doing.

PMMRC Committee

The Perinatal and Maternal Mortality Review Committee is appointed by the Minister of Health. The current Chairperson is Professor Cindy Farquhar. For more information on the Committee see our website: www.PMMRC.health.govt.nz

PMMRC's purpose is to review New Zealand's perinatal (any infant from 20 weeks gestation or at least 400 gm if gestation not known, up until 28 complete days of life) and maternal deaths, and report

to the Minister of Health on how to reduce the numbers of preventable deaths.

The first major national initiative of PMMRC commenced on 1 July when we asked all Lead Maternity Carers and other clinicians involved in a perinatal death to enter information on the website www.pmmrc.otago.ac.nz

Chairperson's message

It is just over 18 months since the Minister of Health established the PMMRC. What have we achieved in this time?

- Our initial efforts focused on establishing a system for reporting all perinatal deaths using a form based on the Paediatric Society of Australia and NZ guidelines. Piloting of forms took place in early 2006 and from the 1 July 2006 we have attempted to collect data on all perinatal deaths via a web based system.

- Local coordinators have been appointed for each DHB and we have held two Coordinators Workshops. Two more are planned – 16 March and 28 August 2007.

- A Maternal Death Working Group was established that reports to the PMMRC. This group will be piloting maternal forms in the next few months.

In 2007, we will analyse the 6 months data we collected in 2006. This will be summarised in our first annual report to be published in mid 2007.

This year we will consider hypoxic ischaemic encephalopathy more closely and decide if we need further data collection on this

In October 2006 our work had a great boost with the appointment of Vicki Masson as National Coordinator. Vicki, a midwife, has worked in many different areas of practice. She is your first point of contact for queries and is responsible for ensuring the data is complete and for providing support to the local coordinators.

Thank you to Vicki and to everyone who has supported the work of the committee so far. I look forward to working with you in the future and publishing our first report.



Professor Cindy Farquhar

Stillbirth and Newborn Death Support (SANDS)

Last year was a very busy one for SANDS as we had the good fortune to have a full-time paid worker. I was funded through the Vodafone NZ World of Difference Programme.

So 2006 saw the development of many activities for SANDS

- we had four new groups established around the country -Wellsford, New Plymouth, Hawke's Bay, (which was re-established) and Queenstown
- we held our first national training weekend which was very successful
- we made submissions on midwifery pre-registration education and on Section 88

- we held many activities for Baby Loss Awareness Week

But most importantly we were able to support many bereaved parents and families throughout the country. This year will be just as busy but we'll be back to normal with all of our work being on a voluntary basis. We have our biennial conference later in the year, so watch out for information on our website www.sands.org.nz

Vicki Culling
PMMRC Committee Member &
SANDS NZ Project Coordinator

Baby Loss Awareness Week



On the 9 October 2006, the first day of Baby Loss Awareness Week, representatives of SANDS pinned 596 pairs of booties to a banner representing New Zealand's stillbirth numbers for 2003. Sadly, this represents 1% of all births in New Zealand.

Welcome to a new member of the PMMRC



Dr Ted Hughes works as an obstetric anaesthetist at Waitakere Hospital, as an intensive care specialist at North Shore Hospital; and as a pain specialist at Greenlane Hospital. Previously he was a cardiothoracic and obstetric anaesthetist at

Greenlane and National Women's Hospitals. He is married to Margaret Blakeley and has two children. For nearly 20 years he has worked in obstetric anaesthesia because he enjoys providing pain relief for labouring women, and helping provide safe childbirth. Ted's, mother comes from Areora village on Atiu in the Cook Islands and he brings a knowledge Pacific Island health matters to the Committee.

PMMRC Rapid Reporting Forms

We have just updated the Mother and Baby Forms and the Guidelines for completing these. If you start a form and do not finish it at the time you can now save it and go back at a later date to complete it. Under your registration ID there is a section for your incomplete forms.

We would prefer you to complete the forms on the website but paper forms are available for those who do not have access to the internet (or who only have a slow dial-up system). Please ensure you are using the November 2006 forms if you are completing paper forms. These are available from your Local Coordinator or the National PMMRC Coordinator, [Vicki Masson](#)

Perinatal Mortality Review Meetings and Classification Forms

We believe that local Perinatal Mortality Review Meetings have an essential role to play in determining causes of death; in quality improvement; and communication among clinicians and then with families.

Our Local Coordinators are involved in these meetings and relevant information is also collected on behalf of the PMMRC. We hope that all deaths will be classified using our Classification Forms. The forms use PSANZ (Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand) classifications. Guidelines for the completion of Classification Forms are available from the Local Coordinator.

Information Leaflet

A family/whānau information sheet is now available on the website for you to give out when you are collecting information for the forms. You can get the leaflet from either the website on which you enter data:

www.pmmrc.otago.ac.nz

or the general PMMRC website:

www.PMMRC.health.govt.nz

Maternal Mortality

As you see in the Chair's letter overleaf, data collection forms for maternal deaths are being drafted. Please advise the Local Coordinator or

the National Coordinator about any maternal deaths and they will arrange for the paper forms to be sent to you once these have been finalised. A process for notifying maternal deaths online is also being developed.

If you have any questions about data collecting following perinatal or maternal deaths please do not hesitate to contact your [Local Coordinator](#) .

or [Vicki Masson](#),

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