

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER



EDITORIAL

At last! A National Newsletter. How exciting to be part of another landmark, one of many being experienced by Australian midwives in the short history of their National Association - not yet 10 years old.

This Newsletter should not be seen as a proforma but rather the prodromata - warning signs, or should I say, the heralding of things to come.

Inside you will find reports from all of the branches in each of the six States and both Territories.

Our membership has grown from 300 in the original 3 branches to more than 1,000 in 8 branches.

Our stature continues to develop as our Executive strives to meet the increasing demands from State and Federal Bodies and from other health professional organisations. While we have established our independence, we have retained the respect of our colleagues in nursing and other allied groups.

Now on the threshold of becoming a collegiate Body, the Australian College of Midwives Incorporated, we ask for your continued support.

We need help. A name for our Newsletter, articles written, an editor and letters giving your thoughts on just what should be included.

A national form of communication which we hope to be circulated quarterly will only be as great as the material you send.

Congratulations to all the members of the National Midwives Association who have so keenly put their shoulder to the wheel.

Well done and good luck for the future.

PAMELA HAYES
(Your temporary Editor)

NATIONAL MIDWIVES EXECUTIVE 1985-1987

<u>PRESIDENT:</u>	MRS. BETH WADDINGTON (S.A. Delegate)
<u>VICE-PRESIDENT</u>		MRS. ALISON GARRISON/MRS. CYNTHIA TURNBULL (Tasmanian Delegate)
<u>SECRETARY:</u>		MISS PAM KILPATRICK (Victorian Delegate)
<u>TREASURER:</u>		MISS FAYE THOMPSON (Queensland Delegate)
<u>COMMITTEE:</u>			MISS DEIRDRE SIDDALL/MRS. JUDY D'ELMAINE (NSW Delegate)
			MISS MARGARET BRAITHWAITE (ACT Delegate)
			MISS JUDITH DAVIS/SR. FRANCESCA BRENNAN (WA Delegate)
			MRS. PAULINE GLOVER (NT Delegate)

A.C.T. MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

Congratulations to our colleagues who have brought us our first National Newsletter. It will help us communicate, share and sometimes differ from, yet still support each other as we grow in national strength.

The A.C.T. Midwives Association was established in 1979 with a membership of ten, we now have well over one hundred financial members, so many of whom are enthusiastic, contributing members of our group.

We have been active in promoting the role of the midwife, resulting in an increased awareness of our history and function in the health field which is basic to our survival. We have been able to expand as a representative body, able to speak for midwives and available for consultation on issues affecting our profession.

Midwives have been represented on the A.C.T. Health Authority Working Committee on a birthing centre for Canberra and are participating in ongoing meetings. At present there are still opposing views, those who feel that changes in the hospital system which incorporate those points seen as important to both consumer and the professionals should be the goal, and others who feel that resistance and rigidity will prevent the creation of a birthing centre environment that it is not possible to give consumers any real sense of control over their birthing experience in the hospital situation.

A.C.T. midwives are represented on the Antenatal Educators Committee who meet regularly, this is an active group from all involved areas.

Involvement in research has continued, together with ongoing education, interaction with other health care professionals and community support groups. We have been fortunate in obtaining interesting guest speakers for our meetings. Our regional seminars continue, providing opportunity for colleagues from surrounding areas and interstate to attend.

Members are encouraged to attend the Interstate and International Conferences and some funds are made available to help in some small way those attending.

Details of the meetings of the National Executive provide information, the views and aspirations of our State Associations and the way forward as planned representing the whole family of Australian midwives. We now look forward to sharing through our Newsletter with many more of our colleagues nationally now that we have our journal to make it possible.

We are delighted with the success of the "Breast Feeding Protocol" (it actually does appear to be reducing conflicting advice). It continues to be sold throughout Australia and has been adopted as some State and hospital policy. The complimentary feedback from midwives is gratifying.

KATH LARSSON
President





M.I.N.Q.

Midwives Information Network Queensland

QUEENSLAND MIDWIVES ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 1203
FORTITUDE VALLEY Q 4006

No. 1 Summer 198

Comments From The Collective

Greetings to Midwives everywhere. A brief comment to introduce this publication which we hope will be more than "Just a Newsletter".

The main aim of M.I.N.Q. is 'Networking' — keeping midwives in touch with each other by removing the barriers of distance and non-communication by opening the door to dialogue, sharing and support.

For M.I.N.Q. to achieve this aim we need lots of input from midwives statewide. The publication belongs to you and its contents will depend largely on information received from members. We are interested in receiving letters, short articles relevant to midwifery, informal communication about what is happening in your area, conference dates, book reviews, questions for our Q. and A. section, case studies (not more than 200 words please), cartoons and whatever else you believe would be of interest to midwives.

Needed also are names of people who are prepared to act as 'Contacts' in their area. A brief description would help too. Names facilitate communication and are the basis of networking strength. To start the ball rolling, we would like to introduce ourselves and include our work numbers for professional contacts.

CONTACT MIDWIVES

Heather Pollock, Royal Women's Hospital, Phone 253 7181.
Special Interest: Ante Natal and Outpatient Services.

Joan Webster, Royal Women's Hospital, Phone 253 8590.
Special Interest: Research and Infection Control.

Claire Doherty, Mater Mothers' Hospital, Brisbane,
Phone 240 8877. *Special Interest: Neonatal Nursing.*

Marjorie Neil, Mater Mothers' Hospital, Brisbane,
Phone: 240 8856. *Special Interest: Neonates and Their Parents.*

Midwifery Across Australia *Some Points From State Reports*

ACT

■ Midwives have been represented on the ACT Health Authority Working Committee on a Birthing Centre for Canberra. There are still opposing views — on the one hand, those who feel that changes in the hospital system which incorporate those points seem as important to both the consumer and the professional and that this should be the goal; and on the other hand, allies who feel that resistance and rigidity will prevent the creation of a centre environment in which it is not possible to give consumers any real sense of control over their experience in the hospital situation.

■ ACT Midwives are represented on the Antenatal Educators Committee — an active group from all involved areas.

■ The Neonatal Charge Nurse Position in Canberra has been filled and the successful applicant **does** have Midwifery thanks to your replies. (All states were asked for urgent replies on their own situations.)

NSW

■ The State Conference was very successful (some papers available). A pilot experiment is being undertaken where midwives are attending women in the community and caring for their general and reproductive health, especially in the area of preventative medicine, e.g. they are doing breast examinations and taking cervical smears. (ACT's Comments — as it is no longer mandatory for community nurses to have midwifery training this service to women in society is especially valuable — midwives and the community nurses will be complementary to each other.)

■ The NSW Midwives Association has adopted its Code of Practice. The newly introduced career structures for nurses have caused considerable unrest amongst midwives since they see many anomalies in the structure especially with regard to the creation of specialist areas in labour, ante and post natal care. The membership has requested the State Executive of NSW Nurses' Association, to speak at the next general meeting in December, hopefully to clarify matters and allow midwives to point out to her, areas that they see as requiring review. Anomalies case to be heard in January.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

■ In the process of breaking away as a special interest group of RANF and are drafting a constitution.

■ Preliminary discussions on the 6th Biennial National Conference (to be held in Darwin in 1989) have been held.

■ One of the student midwives for the N.T. "topped the State". (N.T. student midwives sit the same examinations "with" the NSW SM's. Congratulations to NT.)

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

■ Country Study Day held at Minlaton on Yorke Peninsula in October. A submission has been presented to the SA Health Commission Consultative Committee developing a policy on Obstetric and Neonatal Practice for South Australia.

TASMANIA

■ The membership has increased, and members have voted unanimously to stay with RANF.

■ Tasmania Midwives Association is preparing a submission for a Birthing Centre at the Q.A.H. The Midwives Clinic is working well there.

■ The 5th Biennial National Conference is in Hobart, May 1987. Full registration \$240.00

VICTORIA

■ Victorian Nursing Council — Midwives Representative, Pam Kilpatrick, has been elected and appointed to this position. The Midwives Association of Victoria members extend their congratulations to Pam.

■ Career Structure — implementation of the new career structure is causing major upheavals, in particular the lack of recognition to midwives and of non designation of delivery suites. The M.A.V. has corresponded with both the Health Department of Victoria and the RANF (Victorian Branch). A deputation of M.A.V. Executive members met with the H.D.V. Nursing Advisory Unit but little satisfaction was gained at that time.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

■ Membership has more than doubled since disaffiliation from RANF.

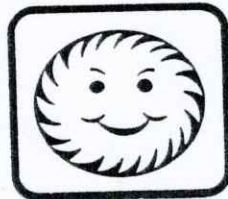
■ A newsletter is now underway — the Health Department is undertaking printing and distribution. Bumper stickers have been produced. A logo is now completed for their stationery and sweaters!

■ Regulations relating to domiciliary midwifery practice under the Health Act are currently under review and the W.A. Midwives Association has representation on that committee. They have had group discussions on where midwifery is and where they saw the deficits and problems.

■ The group has asked for representation on the Perinatal Mortality and Morbidity Committee — A Standing Committee under the umbrella of the Health Department.

■ The Premier's Department has called for representation on the Women's Advisory Council and several members have made submissions.

QUEENSLAND



■ Major Midwifery hospitals in Queensland receive minutes from the monthly Queensland Midwives Association meetings. So, to avoid duplication only a brief report is included here. STANDARDS OF PRACTICE: A draft compiled by Q.M.A. members was presented to the national body at the November meeting.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE: The Conference, held in Mackay, was a professional success and stimulated a lot of interest throughout North Queensland.

NEW SUB-BRANCH: Townsville is setting up a sub-branch. Congratulations to you! We were delighted to see Ann Liddell at our November meeting and hope to see Midwives from outside the Metropolitan area at our meetings whenever they are "in town". If you feel shy, contact one of the "Contacts". We'll take you along!

MONEY RAISING: We have formed a fund raising sub-committee to keep funds "topped up" and to assist delegates to attend conferences (Hobart, Holland). Why not try it in your area? As part of the fund raising effort, we are offering conference papers from the 14th Biennial Conference (Brisbane) at a special low price of \$4.00 (this includes postage).

■ The Q.M.A. meets at 6.30 pm on the last Thursday of each month at the Division of Child Health, St Paul's Terrace, Brisbane. Membership statewide is currently around 70.

Coming Events

5th National Midwives Association Biennial Conference, May 18-20 1987. "Midwifery — The Families' Future"

I.C.M. 21st Congress. The Hague, Netherlands, August 23-28, 1987. "Midwives Hold The Key To Healthy Families"

Royal Women's Hospital Seminar. 8.00am-4.30pm, 28 February 1987. Venue: Edwin Tooth Lecture Theatre. Enquiries: J. Kirschbaum, School of Nursing, R.W.H. phone 253 8250.

Nursing Awareness '87. 28th April: Breakfast in the Queen Street Mall for Nurses, 29th and 30th April. 1st May: Exhibits in the City Hall. Q.M.A. will be exhibiting.

Planning To Attend A Conference?

HOBART

We are informed by Australian Airlines that bookings to Hobart are at a premium in May. Therefore, it is advisable to book if you are planning to attend the 5th Biennial Conference. To obtain available concessions contact your local Australian Airlines Convention Travel Department.



THE HAGUE

Qantas is the official carrier for the Australian delegation. At this stage we don't have any information on available travel packages. Any members interested in attending the conference should contact Faye Thompson — (07) 253 8250.

Current Literature

Australian Journal of Advanced Nursing, Spring 1986
 Pethedine Late in Labour: To Give or not to Give?
 Lactation Suppression: A Pilot Study

Nursing Times (U.K.)

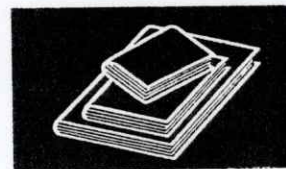
Drug Free Pain Relief in Labour
(page 49, 22 October 1986)

Invitro Fertilisation: A Way of Hope
(page 27, 29 October 1986)

The Birth of Michael (page 29, 29 October 1986)

Parents & Childrens Magazine: February/March 1987
Birth in Australia: Do You Really Need A Doctor?

Australian Women's Weekly, February 1987
Childbirth in the 80's — What are the Options?



M.I.N.Q. does not necessarily agree with all the opinions expressed in these articles but as midwives we need to be aware of and familiar with literature being published.
The Collective

Q. and A.

Are there any advantages to pre operative showering with an antiseptic solution?

Bathing with an antiseptic detergent solution on one occasion does not have any effect on subsequent wound infection¹. No increase was found in the post operative wound infection rate at the Royal Women's Hospital after pre operative antiseptic showering was discontinued². A thorough application of an ALCOHOLIC antiseptic solution at the time of surgery

however, is effective in reducing skin flora¹. Labouring patients, unable to shower, should be washed with a disposable cloth, rinsed in clean water and dried with a fresh dry towel. □

1. Ayliffe, G.A.J. et al. *A Comparison of Pre-operative Bathing with Chlorhexidine-Detergent and Non-Medicated Soap in the Prevention of Wound Infection*. *J. Hosp. Infection*. 1983, 4:237-244.
2. Figures From the Royal Women's Hospital Wound Survey. June '85 — December '86.
3. Lilly, H.A. et al. *Limits to Progressive Reduction of Resistant Skin Flora by Disinfection*. *J. Clin. Pathology* 1979, 32:382-385.

Computers in Health Care

The Royal Women's Hospital, Brisbane, is one of a number of hospitals involved in the Health Departments' Strategic Plan for Computing.

On the 6th September 1986 we said good-bye to QHIS and welcomed the pilot, computer Health Care Information System. We now have 32 computer terminals and 7 personal computers on the Royal Women's Hospital complex.

The operational sub-systems at RWH to date include:

1. Security — each individual user and each terminal is given a security level to access the information they require.
2. Registration — Registration of patient details.
3. Admission/discharge/transfer
4. Non-clinical Support — Reception and switch enquiries screens.
5. Medical Records — chart locations, etc.
6. Message switching — enabling messages to be sent to specific areas or specific users via computer.

The next sub-system we are preparing for is the Bookings sub-system. This will computerize all our outpatients appointments. Most midwives have daily contact with the computers in one way or another. Our main involvement is to register and admit all babies born at the hospital. Nightly reports are printed ready to forward to the Registrar General's Office and Child Health.

Our role in this pilot scheme is to evaluate the systems which are operational, and to present this information to the Strategic Plan for computing, to enable the development of an 'ideal' computer system for Queensland Hospitals.

As midwives it is essential that we play an active role in developing those systems which will have an impact on our work. If we leave this to others they will design the systems to solve the problems as they perceive them.

D. Willocks, Registered Midwife

Drugs in Pregnancy

BROMOCRIPTINE

During the past decade, a new drug has come into use in midwifery, replacing the older, less safe forms of treatment for suppression of lactation.

The drug is **Bromocriptine**, known by its brand name **Parlodel**. Bromocriptine is a peptide ergot alkaloid, without the vasoconstricting effects of other ergot compounds. It is described as being a dopaminergic receptor stimulant (or agonist) as it mimics the action of Dopamine, which suppresses the secretion of prolactin by the anterior pituitary.

Recommended dosage for post-partum lactation suppression is one tablet (2.5mg) twice daily for fifteen days. The entire course must be taken to avoid the incidence of rebound lactation. Three important points for good nursing care are as follows:

1. The drug should be taken with food to minimise the possibility of side effects, such as nausea, vomiting, dizziness and headache.

2. Be on hand to assist the patient getting out of bed after the first doses of the drug, as dizziness and fainting have been reported to occur.
3. Because of the effect of the drug in lowering serum prolactin, a quicker return to ovulation will occur post-partum, often as early as fourteen days after starting treatment. Patients should be advised to take this into account in their family-planning arrangements, and if appropriate, contraception help should be provided before the patient is discharged from hospital.

*Claud Munro, Pharmacist
Royal Women's Hospital*

*We trust that you
have enjoyed this
inaugural issue of
the M.I.N.Q.
Newsletter, and we
invite you to send
in your views,
reactions,
comments and
criticisms to be
included in the
Letters
to the
Editor
section
next issue.*

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— 371 0239

QUEENSLAND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

PUBLICITY:

NURSING AWARENESS WEEK: We are to have a display in the City Hall again this year and it will be attended by members from Brisbane and Toowoomba mostly. The week will be opened by Mr. M. Ahearn, Minister for Health in Queensland, on 26 April 1987. Last year's activities stimulated interest in Nursing, gave colleagues an opportunity to meet/interact with each other, and gave politicians a chance to be confronted with Nursing issues.

NEWSLETTER: We have produced the first copy! There will be more to follow - probably four (4) copies per year. About 4 energetic members in Brisbane met, collected and collated the material, agonized for a time over The Name! and then enquired about cost etc. Some advertisements for Medical Supplies Companies etc. may appear in future issues. Many thanks to Marjorie and her daughter for the printing and typesetting: and many thanks to the committee - it looks great.

OFFICE-BEARERS 1987:

Election of office-bearers for the coming "term" (2 years) was held at the Annual General Meeting in February. The new people are:-

PRESIDENT: .. Mrs. Marjorie Neil (Mater Mothers Hospital, Brisbane)
VICE-PRESIDENT: .. Mrs. Laura Tickell (Toowoomba Hospital, Mothers)
SECRETARY: .. Ms. Brenda MacPhail (Ipswich Hospital, Ipswich)
TREASURER: .. Ms. Claire Doherty (Mater Mothers Hospital, Brisbane)

SEMINARS/CONFERENCES:

ANNUAL "STATE" CONFERENCE: Tentatively plans are for September 1987. The Royal Women's Hospital, Brisbane is celebrating its 50th Anniversary in 1988 and have invited the QMA to join in their and the Australia Bicentennial celebrations.

NATIONAL - HOBART, TASMANIA: Several members plan to go to this conference. Fund raising is starting in earnest.

INTERNATIONAL - THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS: The present count of members planning to attend this conference is 4 or 5. However the grapevine indicated a few more midwives (non-members) from Queensland are also going.

PRACTICE:

MIDWIVES' CLINICS: More are becoming a reality. The Townsville hospital, the Toowoomba hospital.

URINE TESTING - BOILING METHOD: This method of testing urine for albumen during pregnancy, is no longer practised in some major hospitals. The presence of albumen in urine during pregnancy is detected via the Ames Albustix strip. It has been found that a considerable proportion of women (over 16%) have shown 1+ of protein on Albustix testing. In the past a boiling test was usually negative in such patients and so 1+ protein on Albustix could be dismissed as insignificant after a boiling test was performed. Therefore, it is now advised that where Albustix testing shows 1+ only of proteinuria this can be ignored in the absence of any other suspicious signs of pre-eclampsia.

NURSING MOTHERS' RESEARCH AWARD: This year's award - the inaugural one - went to Dr. Lewis (Mater Mothers' Hospital, Brisbane) and Dr. Lennon (Mater Mothers' Hospital, Brisbane) for their survey on the Effects of Early Complimentary Feeding on the Failure of Lactation. The survey was a relatively small one carried out at the QEII hospital in Brisbane.

Queensland Midwives' Association (continued)

Sadly, no midwives were mentioned (until prompted) by either the Nursing Mothers or the recipients of the award. On further questioning it seems we do still exist and have a role to play helping the mothers.

PUBLICATIONS: Congratulations Joan (Webster) on the publication of your article on the Suppression of Lactation, which appears in the latest edition of the Australian Journal of Advanced Nursing.

FAYE THOMPSON,
Q'ld Representative,
A.C.M.I. Executive.

NORTHERN TERRITORY MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

Much has happened since the last report in terms of the Association. The Annual General Meeting saw a change of Executive:

PRESIDENT: Debra Thoms (Area Nursing Officer, Royal Darwin Hospital)
VICE-PRESIDENT: Lesley Stewart (Mother)
SECRETARY: Robyn Elliott (School Nurse)
TREASURER: Brenda O'Connell (Evening Supervisor)
NATIONAL DELEGATE: Pauline Glover

As with any new Executive it has taken a while to get into the swing. Meetings have continued on a monthly basis and attendance has varied. The November meeting took the form of a lamington drive ** 65 dozen **.

A good Fund Raising method but please, no lamingtons for morning tea !!!!

The Executive has been busy drafting a Constitution to enable us to break away as a special interest group of RANF. The Constitution is currently with a lawyer for advice on the legalities and we hope to advise RANF by the December meeting that we are going to be an autonomous body.

The conduct of the 6th Biennial National Conference has been discussed, however, we are still to formalise on paper. A formal proposal will be available at the next National Executive meeting for consideration and approval prior to the 5th National Conference in Tasmania.

The best news of all is that one of the students from the Northern Territory Midwifery program "topped the State". It is unfortunate that it cannot be recorded as such in N.S.W., however we are really proud of this and the other students.

PAULINE GLOVER

Pauline has since left Darwin to go right 'down the track' to Adelaide. We look forward to reuniting with our territorian colleagues in Hobart and to hear of progress for our 1989 National Conference.

P.H.

AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF MIDWIVES
(FORMERLY NATIONAL MIDWIVES ASSOCIATION, AUSTRALIA)
INCORPORATED IN A.C.T.

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