6 November 2018

**Collaborating on diabetes for healthy mums and babies**

Sunshine Coast Health Institute (SCHI) is hosting the **Diabetes in Pregnancy Education Day, Thursday November 8**. The Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS), in collaboration with the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC), is providing an educational opportunity for professionals and students involved in the care of pregnancy complicated by diabetes.

The education day will present a holistic perspective relating to the management of diabetes in pregnancy.

Dr Rebekah Shakhoyskoy, Staff Specialist in General and Obstetric Medicine and Acting Director of Education and Inter-Professional Learning at SCHHS, said the inter-professional team at SCHHS who currently provide care for these patients will be facilitating the education. Some patients who have experienced a pregnancy complicated by diabetes will also share their experiences first-hand.

“The day will cater for the learning needs of a variety of professionals and students. We have final year USC dietetic and midwifery students participating as part of their final year studies.

“Such a collaborative educational approach aims to ensure that all health professionals are well equipped to work together to achieve the best outcomes for mothers and babies in pregnancies complicated by diabetes,” Dr Shakhoyskoy said.

Diabetes is the fastest growing chronic condition in Australia, increasing at a faster rate than other chronic diseases. Gestational diabetes, diabetes developed during pregnancy, is the fastest growing type of diabetes in Australia, affecting thousands of pregnant women.

Queensland Perinatal statistics revealed that of 61,873 mothers who gave birth in Queensland in 2016, almost 12 per cent had developed Gestational Diabetes Mellitus, and 0.8% had pre-existing diabetes.

Most women with diabetes who manage their glucose levels have healthy babies.

The treatment for gestational diabetes is often a healthy eating plan, regular physical activity and monitoring and maintaining blood glucose levels in the target range during pregnancy.
If target glucose levels are unable to be maintained with these measures, treatment with medications such as insulin are advised to attempt to prevent any significant risks to the mother and baby.

Babies born to women affected by diabetes are at increased risk of being born early, having breathing problems and low blood glucose. In addition, they are at risk of being born larger than normal. Both mother and baby have a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes later in life.

Education opportunities such as this one endeavour to ensure that the inter-professional health care team can work together effectively and communicate consistently to achieve the best outcomes for mothers and babies.

ENDS

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY

Dr Rebekah Shakhovskoy, Dr Sophie Poulter (Obstetric Physician and Endocrinologist) and two diabetes patients with their babies will be available photos and interviews.

When: 8 November, 2018
Time: 10:15am-10:45am
Where: Meet outside SCHI Auditorium

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