

### Media statement

25 February 2019

#### Seeing double on the Sunshine Coast

This week is **Multiple Birth Awareness Week (24 February – 3 March)**.

Sunshine Coast University Hospital (SCUH) is proud to have delivered 72 sets of twins since opening, six already this year.

Cheryl Rutherford, Midwifery Unit Manager, Women's and Families, SCUH, said the journey of carrying, delivering and raising two or more babies at once could not be underestimated.

"Families with multiples often have a long road ahead. About 65 per cent of multiples are born pre-term, often meaning a stressful start for the family. Then comes trying to establish feeding routines, often tough enough with one baby.

"Having a trusted and supportive network around you is critical regardless of a multiple birth or not.

"We provide all our new Mum's essential contacts who can offer the best advice on everything including breastfeeding, linking in with Child Health and how to find a local playgroup. Particularly useful for our families of multiples is the Sunshine Coast Multiple Birth Association," she said.

Amy, mother of Mason and Isobel who were delivered at SCUH late last week, said: "Throughout my pregnancy I have felt I have had the best preparation for what lies ahead.

"Now that our beautiful babies are here we are looking forward to getting home and building the confidence to get out into the big wide world.

"I'm sure by getting involved in activities such as playgroups, we'll have the opportunity to pick up some tips and tricks off other families of twins. Having other people who understand our challenges will be so important," she said.

The proportion of multiple births has remained consistent for the past decade (4781 multiple births across Australia in 2016). Although over the past 40 years, Australia has seen an increase in twin pregnancy rates. This trend has partly been influenced by the use of assisted reproductive treatment and increasing maternal age.

# Sunshine Coast

## Hospital and Health Service

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For support and resources for multiple births visit Australian Multiple Birth Association ([amba.org.au](http://amba.org.au)).

**ENDS**

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