Review of Pregnancies, Births and Newborns in Queensland 1988 to 2007
Queensland Maternal and Perinatal Quality Council 2010

Review of Pregnancies, Births and Newborns in Queensland 1988 to 2007

Contact details for further information
All correspondence should be addressed to:
The Secretariat
Queensland Maternal and Perinatal Quality Council
Maternity Unit, Primary, Community and Extended Care Branch
Queensland Health
GPO Box 48
BRISBANE QLD 4001
Ph: (07) 32340687
Email: QMPQC@health.qld.gov.au

Report author:
Professor Michael Humphrey,
Chair, Queensland Maternal and Perinatal Quality Council
PREFACE

The Queensland Maternal and Perinatal Quality Council was established pursuant to, and functions under, the quality assurance provisions of section 30-38 of the Health Services Act 1991, s31, which provides members with legislative protection and enables the Council to undertake confidential enquiries into maternal and perinatal morbidity and mortality. The primary purpose of the Council is to provide advice and make recommendations to the Director-General and the Minister for Health, through the Patient Safety and Quality Executive Committee, on matters relating to state-wide and facility-specific morbidity and mortality.

The Council recommenced activity in mid-2009, after a three year period during which its purposes and functionality were reviewed. This report contains evidence of the work of the Council to present detailed analyses of mortality and selected areas of morbidity within the maternal and perinatal populations of Queensland for the twenty year period 1988 to 2007, as a “snapshot” of past outcomes, and a basis for its future quality agenda. The report highlights the importance of maternal and infant mortality as indicators which can be used to monitor trends and improvements in the health of the community, and offers opportunities to benchmark and compare outcomes between regions and populations.

The ongoing work of the Council will include the review and evaluation of health indicators using routinely collected data around measured quality, sentinel events and clinical audit. The systematic review of these outcome indicators should lead to the identification and evaluation of trends and patterns in healthcare, on which the Council may report and advise. The report contains the data which were obtained from the following sources:

- Perinatal Data Collection Unit (PDCU)
- Health Statistics Centre (HIC)
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)
- Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages.
- Office of the State Coroner

The Council is grateful for the co-operation of the Registrar for Births, Deaths and Marriages and the State Coroner who have facilitated access to relevant data.

I would like to thank the Council members, and those who support them, for their commitment to improving maternal and perinatal outcomes. I trust that clinicians throughout Queensland will find this report helpful and ask that they give careful consideration to the Council’s key findings.

Queensland Health supports the work of the Queensland Maternal and Perinatal Quality Council with the realisation that sound health planning principles need to be based on the best available evidence including analyses of health outcomes by clinical experts such as form the contents of this report. Comments on the findings of this report are welcomed, and I hope you find it interesting and informative.

Dr Tony O’Connell
Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Healthcare Improvement
Contents

INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................................................... 8

KEY FINDINGS ........................................................................................................................................... 9

1. PREGNANCY AND NEWBORN CARE ................................................................................................. 11
   1.1 Care mode: .................................................................................................................................... 11
   1.2 Home birth: .................................................................................................................................. 13
   1.3 Maternal age: ............................................................................................................................. 14
   1.4 Gestation at birth: ....................................................................................................................... 17
   1.5 Birthweight: .............................................................................................................................. 19
   1.6 Multiple pregnancies: ................................................................................................................ 20
   1.7 Assisted conception: .................................................................................................................. 22
   1.8 Onset of labour: ......................................................................................................................... 27
   1.9 Mode of birth: ............................................................................................................................ 29
   1.10 Effect of previous pregnancy on mode of birth: ....................................................................... 35
   1.11 Effect of previous caesarean section on mode of birth: ......................................................... 36
   1.12 Indigenous mothers and their babies ...................................................................................... 37

2. MATERNAL AND PERINATAL MORTALITY ......................................................................................... 41
   2.1 Definitions: .................................................................................................................................. 41
   2.2 Maternal deaths: .......................................................................................................................... 42
   2.3 Perinatal deaths - incidence: ........................................................................................................ 44
   2.4 Perinatal deaths – causation: ....................................................................................................... 47
   2.5 Congenital anomalies .................................................................................................................. 51

TABLES ................................................................................................................................................. 52

DATA SOURCES USED IN THIS REPORT ................................................................................................... 84

TERMS OF REFERENCE ............................................................................................................................ 85

Queensland Maternal and Perinatal Quality Council ............................................................................. 85