

Robert Hoge

From: Robert Hoge
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 7:34 AM
To: Jasmina Joldic
Subject: Fwd: Sunday Mail - birthday kits inquiry
Attachments: DDH_Courier Mail Birthing Kits.pdf

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From: Laura Verney
Sent: Saturday, February 23, 2019 3:01:27 PM
To: Kirstine Sketcher-Baker; John Wakefield
Cc: SDLO; Robert Hoge; news
Subject: RE: Sunday Mail - birthday kits inquiry

Hi all,

Closing the loop on this - attached is the response that went back to Sunday Mail from Darling Downs HHS.

SDLO – There will be a number of articles in the Sunday Mail tomorrow on rural maternity services. I've provided a heads up to DPC and they have the most recent responses on this.

Please feel free to give me a call if you'd like any more info.

Thanks,
Laura

Laura Verney

Media and Issues Team Leader

Phone: 07 3708 5378 | Mobile: [REDACTED]

Address: Level 3, 33 Charlotte St, Brisbane QLD 4000

Email: laura.verney@health.qld.gov.au

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Queensland Health acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land, and pays respect to Elders past, present and future.

From: Kirstine Sketcher-Baker
Sent: Saturday, 23 February 2019 12:24 PM
To: Laura Verney <Laura.Verney@health.qld.gov.au>; John Wakefield <John.Wakefield@health.qld.gov.au>
Cc: SDLO <SDLO@health.qld.gov.au>; Robert Hoge <Robert.Hoge@health.qld.gov.au>; news <news@health.qld.gov.au>
Subject: Re: Sunday Mail - birthday kits inquiry

I'd probably remove "assessing services" I'd say the following instead....

. The taskforce is currently speaking with the community and key stakeholders of rural maternity services to seek advice on what steps can be taken to minimise risk for mothers and babies in rural and remote communities, while providing services as close as possible to where they live.

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From: Laura Verney <laura.verney@health.qld.gov.au>
Sent: Saturday, February 23, 2019 9:51 am
To: John Wakefield
Cc: Kirstine Sketcher-Baker; SDLO; Robert Hoge; news
Subject: RE: Sunday Mail - birthday kits inquiry

Good morning,

As an update for you - DDHHS has got back to me to confirm that they do not offer birthing kits and never have. (email attached for your info) They believe they know the Dr who has spoken to the journalist and recall an anecdotal story from approx. 10 years ago where a mother wanted to have a home birth and would have been referred to a private provider for this service.

I will talk to the journalist and let her know that what she has been told is incorrect. I've drafted some lines below in case they still want a written response. Can you please let me know of any changes/additions?

Please attribute to a Queensland Health spokesperson:

Queensland Health does not provide birthing kits to soon-to-be mothers. To say so is false and misleading.

Women across Queensland can have confidence in the quality of our maternity services, in both rural and metropolitan areas.

The welfare and safety of Queensland mothers and babies, including those in rural and remote areas, is a key focus of Queensland Health.

This is why the Rural Maternity Taskforce was established. The taskforce is currently assessing services and speaking with the community and key stakeholders. The taskforce will advise on what steps can be taken to minimise risk for mothers and babies in rural and remote communities, while providing services as close as possible to where they live.

For background (not for attribution):

Birth kits are available through private maternity service providers and support groups.

Public services may refer a mother to a private service provider for this product, in the rare instance it is requested.

ENDS

Thanks,
Laura

From: John Wakefield

Sent: Friday, 22 February 2019 10:19 PM

To: news <news@health.qld.gov.au>

Cc: Kirstine Sketcher-Baker <Kirstine.Sketcher-Baker@health.qld.gov.au>; SDLO <SDLO@health.qld.gov.au>

Subject: Re: Sunday Mail - birthday kits inquiry

First I've heard of it. See what DD say and I will ask Rebecca K first thing.

Smells a bit of rural doc agenda. I'll check with Neil Beaton in am.

Dr John Wakefield PSM

MB CHB MPH (research) FRACGP FACRRM FRACMA

Deputy Director-General

Clinical Excellence Division

Department of Health

Adjunct Professor School of Medicine Griffith University

Adjunct Professor of Public Health Queensland University of Technology

Level 14, Queensland Health Building

33 Charlotte Street, Brisbane Q 4000

T. (07) 3708 5337

E. John.Wakefield@health.qld.gov.au

On 22 Feb 2019, at 8:43 pm, news <news@health.qld.gov.au> wrote:

Hi John and Kirstine,

Firstly, sorry to have to contact you on a Friday night!

The Sunday mail has come to us with the below enquiry and questions (in email trail). I've gone to DDHHS to get some advice to prepare a response?

Do you have any info or advice on the birthing kits from a statewide perspective?

There deadline is 3pm tomorrow.

Much appreciated,
Laura

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Sent: Friday, February 22, 2019 8:34 pm
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Hey Laura,

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I just want to know whether this is common practice essentially, etc.

Cheers
Dom

On Fri, 22 Feb 2019 at 8:29 pm, news <news@health.qld.gov.au> wrote:

Hi Dom,

Thanks for your enquiry. When are you planning on running this story?

Can you please also advise where the obstetrician works? Are they a QH dr?
Also, are the kits provided to patients by staff in our hospitals or by another means?

Any more detail you have is much appreciated so I can do my best to get you the most accurate info outside of normal office hours.

Thanks,
Laura

From: Cameron, Domanii <[REDACTED].com.au>
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2019 8:18 pm
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Also sorry one more thing, please let me know if the Minister wants to comment as well.

Cheers
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Date: Fri, 22 Feb 2019 at 8:15 pm
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Dom

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Journalist

Courier Mail Sunday Mail

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RTI RELEASE

Journalist: Domanii Cameron
Media organisation: Courier Mail
Email: [REDACTED].com.au

Subject: Birthing Kits

Please attribute to Dr Peter Gillies Darling Downs Health Chief Executive

Providing birth kits is not common practice.

If it has occurred, it would be very rare.

For expectant mothers who have had fast, precipitous labours in the past, we do tailor care to ensure the safety of both mum and bub. This could mean giving her options like induction of labour, or having mum stay close to the hospital during the last few weeks of pregnancy.

This is the same practice as precipitous expectant mums in larger centres like Brisbane where travel may be required and past experience of the mum shows the baby comes quickly.

ENDS

Robert Hoge

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Sent: Saturday, 23 February 2019 3:01 PM
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 Department of Health

Adjunct Professor School of Medicine Griffith University
 Adjunct Professor of Public Health Queensland University of Technology

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Courier Mail Sunday Mail

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Journalist

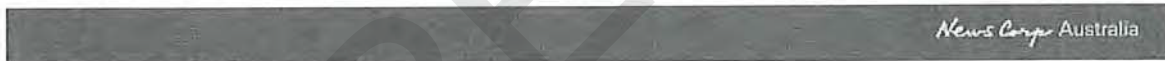
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Robert Hoge

From: Laura Verney
Sent: Friday, 22 February 2019 8:23 PM
To: Amy Hunter
Cc: Kat Wright; news; Robert Hoge; Natalie Patch
Subject: Fwd: Sunday Mail - birthday kits inquiry

Hi Amy,

We've just received the below enquiry from Dom at the courier mail. She's also asked us if the Min would like to comment.

I'll start trying to find out some information on the birthing kits from the HHS and Dept.

Thanks,
Laura

From: [REDACTED] com.au>
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2019 8:18 pm
To: news
Subject: Fwd: Sunday Mail - birthday kits inquiry

Also sorry one more thing, please let me know if the Minister wants to comment as well.

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RTI RELEASE

Robert Hoge

From: Kirstine Sketcher-Baker
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 10:00 PM
To: John Wakefield
Cc: Jeannette Young; Megan Crawford; Hwee Sin Chong; Marco D'arbe; Shelley Nowlan; Robert Hoge
Subject: letter
Attachments: Min letter to Minister Hunt - re Rural Maternity.docx; Premier comments.pdf

Hi John

Please find attached the draft letter to-date.. thanks heaps Megan and Hwee Sin..

The only bits I could find in media monitors that the Premier said are as follows (attached media article)..

- PREMIER Anastacia Palaszczuk says she will work with the Commonwealth to encourage more specialists to move to regional and remote Queens-land, amid criticism over the level of maternity services available for the bush
- "In some instances, it is hard to do so in terms of getting the qualified staff to some of our more remote and regional locations.

Robert, I haven't received any audio transcript from Mins yet.

The premier has said regional and rural.... First statement from Premier mainly focuses on DRs.. second statement could refer to midwives.. we do have issues in both... not sure what we can ask the commonwealth to do in this space?

Anyway, see what you think of the attached..

Marco, are you able to please check the attached letter in terms of correct titles for Mr Hunt and all the CC person (it's the Chair of the CHC).. I took this information off the internet... I'd ask my corro person, but we are a bit short at the moment !!

Thanks



Kirstine Sketcher-Baker

Executive Director

Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Service

Clinical Excellence Division

Department of Health | Queensland Health

p: 07 332 89424

a: 15 Butterfield Street, Herston, QLD 4006

w: [Queensland Health](#) | e: kirstine.sketcher-baker@health.qld.gov.au



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C-ECTF-number

The Hon Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
CABERRA ACT 2600

Cc: Hon Roger Cook MLA

Dear Minister Hunt

I am seeking your support with respect to strengthen the Queensland regional, rural and remote maternity workforce

The Queensland Government is demonstrating its commitment to safe, quality and accessible maternity services through continuing to implement its commitment to fund Hospital and Health Services to employ an additional 100 midwives to meet areas of high demand.

As you may also be aware, I have recently established a Rural Maternity Taskforce to advise on the safety of current rural maternity services in Queensland and what steps can be taken to minimise risk for mothers and babies in rural and remote communities. Initial feedback from consultation has indicated issues regarding attraction, skills and sustainability of the regional, rural and remote clinical workforce.

Rural Generalism in Queensland is a mature and well-established model. The Queensland Rural Generalist Pathway is a well subscribed medical training pathway providing doctors with the necessary skills for rural and remote medical practice, and supply the doctor with an additional skill eg obstetrics and/or anaesthetics that is critical for a rural maternity service. Over their career span Rural Generalists need to maintain their skills and periodically upskill. Upskilling and maintenance requires a rural generalist to leave their place of employment and undertake upskilling and skills maintenance in another locale. Often this process is not financially viable to the employer to release the doctor, and as a result the rural generalist's additional skills may be lost, and consequently the rural maternity service may falter.

Strengthening the commitment to rural generalists by supporting their employer when they are undertaking skills maintenance or upskilling would signal a very strong commitment to advancing rural generalists nationally

Should you require any further information in relation to this matter, I have arranged for title first and last name, position title, name of unit, Department of Health or name of hospital or Health Service , on telephone ##### #####, to be available to assist you.

Yours sincerely

STEVEN MILES MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services

RTI RELEASE

Prepared by: name
position title
branch/unit title
telephone no.
date

Submitted through: name
position title
branch/unit title
telephone no.
date

Cleared by: name
position title
branch/unit title
telephone no.
date

RTI RELEASE

Robert Hoge

From: Kirstine Sketcher-Baker
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 6:26 AM
To: Robert Hoge; John Wakefield
Cc: Jeannette Young; Megan Crawford; Hwee Sin Chong; Marco D'arbe; Shelley Nowlan
Subject: RE: letter
Attachments: Min letter to Minister Hunt - re Rural Maternity.docx

Thanks Robert. 😊
 Updated with Robert's addition of sentence attached.
 ksb

From: Robert Hoge
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 6:00 AM
To: Kirstine Sketcher-Baker <Kirstine.Sketcher-Baker@health.qld.gov.au>; John Wakefield <John.Wakefield@health.qld.gov.au>
Cc: Jeannette Young <Jeannette.Young@health.qld.gov.au>; Megan Crawford <Megan.Crawford@health.qld.gov.au>; Hwee Sin Chong <HweeSin.Chong@health.qld.gov.au>; Marco D'arbe <Marco.Darbe@health.qld.gov.au>; Shelley Nowlan <Shelley.Nowlan@health.qld.gov.au>
Subject: Re: letter

Hi Kirstine,

I haven't received a copy of the audio of the media conference yet, so I don't have a lot to go on, unfortunately.

But it reads really well. Could I suggest amending the second par slightly to read:

"Birthing in Queensland is safe. The Queensland Government is demonstrating its continued commitment to safe, quality and accessible maternity services through our ongoing commitment to fund Hospital and Health Services to employ an additional 100 midwives to meet areas of high demand."

Thanks,
 Robert

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From: Kirstine Sketcher-Baker <kirstine.sketcher-baker@health.qld.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2019 10:00 pm
To: John Wakefield
Cc: Jeannette Young; Megan Crawford; Hwee Sin Chong; Marco D'arbe; Shelley Nowlan; Robert Hoge
Subject: letter

Hi John

Please find attached the draft letter to-date.. thanks heaps Megan and Hwee Sin..

The only bits I could find in media monitors that the Premier said are as follows (attached media article)..

- PREMIER Anastacia Palaszczuk says she will work with the Commonwealth to encourage more specialists to move to regional and remote Queens-land, amid criticism over the level of maternity services available for the bush
- "In some instances, it is hard to do so in terms of getting the qualified staff to some of our more remote and regional locations.

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Marco, are you able to please check the attached letter in terms of correct titles for Mr Hunt and all the CC person (it's the Chair of the CHC).. I took this information off the internet... I'd ask my corro person, but we are a bit short at the moment !!

Thanks



Kirstine Sketcher-Baker

Executive Director

Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Service
Clinical Excellence Division

Department of Health | Queensland Health

p: 07 332 89424

a: 15 Butterfield Street, Herston, QLD 4006

w: Queensland Health | **e:** kirstine.sketcher-baker@health.qld.gov.au



Queensland's health vision | *By 2026 Queenslanders will be among the healthiest people in the world.*

Queensland Health acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land, and pays respect to Elders past, present and future.

C-ECTF-number

The Hon Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
CABERRA ACT 2600

Cc: Hon Roger Cook MLA

Dear Minister Hunt

I am seeking your support with respect to strengthen the Queensland regional, rural and remote maternity workforce

Birthing in Queensland is safe. The Queensland Government is demonstrating its commitment to safe, quality and accessible maternity services through continuing to implement its commitment to fund Hospital and Health Services to employ an additional 100 midwives to meet areas of high demand.

As you may also be aware, I have recently established a Rural Maternity Taskforce to advise on the safety of current rural maternity services in Queensland and what steps can be taken to minimise risk for mothers and babies in rural and remote communities. Initial feedback from consultation has indicated issues regarding attraction, skills and sustainability of the regional, rural and remote clinical workforce.

Rural Generalism in Queensland is a mature and well-established model. The Queensland Rural Generalist Pathway is a well subscribed medical training pathway providing doctors with the necessary skills for rural and remote medical practice, and supply the doctor with an additional skill eg obstetrics and/or anaesthetics that is critical for a rural maternity service. Over their career span Rural Generalists need to maintain their skills and periodically upskill. Upskilling and maintenance requires a rural generalist to leave their place of employment and undertake upskilling and skills maintenance in another locale. Often this process is not financially viable to the employer to release the doctor, and as a result the rural generalist's additional skills may be lost, and consequently the rural maternity service may falter.

Strengthening the commitment to rural generalists by supporting their employer when they are undertaking skills maintenance or upskilling would signal a very strong commitment to advancing rural generalists nationally

Should you require any further information in relation to this matter, I have arranged for title first and last name, position title, name of unit, Department of Health or name of hospital or Health Service, on telephone ##### #####, to be available to assist you.

Yours sincerely

STEVEN MILES MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services

RTI RELEASE

Prepared by: name
position title
branch/unit title
telephone no.
date

Submitted through: name
position title
branch/unit title
telephone no.
date

Cleared by: name
position title
branch/unit title
telephone no.
date

RTI RELEASE SE

Robert Hoge

From: John Wakefield
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 8:31 AM
To: Kirstine Sketcher-Baker; Robert Hoge
Cc: Jeannette Young; Megan Crawford; Hwee Sin Chong; Marco D'arbe; Shelley Nowlan
Subject: RE: letter
Attachments: Min letter to Minister Hunt - re Rural Maternity.docx

Hi all

Thank heaps for doing this at short notice.

Ive made a couple of changes to make more assertive.

Here is the final draft.

Corro – can you please send to Jasmina approved by me.

DDG CEQ

Dr John Wakefield PSM

MB CHB MPH (research) FRACGP FACRRM FRACMA
 Deputy Director-General, Clinical Excellence Division

Phone: 07 3708 5342

Address: Level 14, 33 Charlotte Street, Brisbane, QLD 4000

Email: John.Wakefield@health.qld.gov.au

Queensland Health Department of Health



www.health.qld.gov.au



**Queensland
 Government**



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C-ECTF-number

The Hon Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
CABERRA ACT 2600

Cc: Hon Roger Cook MLA

Dear Minister Hunt

I seek your support to help address the rural and remote clinical workforce shortages in Queensland, especially with respect to maternity services.

The Queensland population is the most distributed of any Australian state and despite this, we have been able to maintain safe and accessible birthing services for women in rural and remote locations. Services are, however facing increasing pressure, especially in recruiting and retaining doctors and midwives.

The Queensland Government is demonstrating its commitment to safe, quality and accessible maternity services through growing the clinical workforce.

Queensland has been a leader in the development of the rural generalist model which has provided critical medical services traditionally associated with specialist practice, to the bush.

In addition, the Queensland Government continues to invest in nursing and midwifery workforce with major commitments including an additional 100 midwives, 400 nurse navigators and nursing and midwifery graduate programs.

As you may also be aware, I have recently established a Rural Maternity Taskforce to advise on the safety of current rural maternity services in Queensland and what steps can be taken to maintain and improve access to birthing services in rural communities. Initial feedback from consultation has indicated significant issues with attracting and retaining skilled clinicians.

Rural Generalism in Queensland is a mature and well-established model. The Queensland Rural Generalist Pathway is a well subscribed medical training pathway providing doctors with the necessary skills for rural and remote medical practice, and supply the doctor with an additional skill eg obstetrics and/or anaesthetics that is critical for a rural maternity service. Over their career span Rural Generalists need to maintain their skills and periodically upskill. Upskilling and maintenance requires a rural generalist to leave their place of employment and undertake upskilling and skills maintenance in another locale. There are significant financial and logistic barriers to supporting this. As a result the rural generalist's additional skills may be lost, and consequently the rural maternity service may be lost. Because these doctors provide all the services in rural towns, there is a significant loss of skilled response to all time critical events, from heart attacks, to road trauma and farm accidents.

I call upon you to work with me to find practical ways to ensure that we maintain and strengthen the resilience of rural health and maternity services through measures which assist in attracting, training and retaining a skilled clinical generalist workforce, and through direct support of critical up-skilling away from the primary service.

Should you require any further information in relation to this matter, I have arranged for title first and last name, position title, name of unit, Department of Health or name of hospital or Health Service , on telephone #### ####, to be available to assist you.

Yours sincerely

STEVEN MILES MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services

Prepared by: name
position title
branch/unit title
telephone no.
date

Submitted through: name
position title
branch/unit title
telephone no.
date

Cleared by: name
position title
branch/unit title
telephone no.
date

RTI RELEASE