

SAVE OUR BIRTH CENTRE!

Summary from our Community-led meeting
held via Zoom on 18 August 2021 @ 10am

- ❤️ 45 Participants
- ❤️ 4 Breakout room discussions took place, each coming up with some solid action points
- ❤️ Hutt Families for Midwives group has written up these notes and is circulating them to participants
- ❤️ COMMUNITY TO CARRY OUT ACTIONS ASAP!

Couldn't attend? We'd still love to hear your thoughts, please email us on savemymidwife@gmail.com

THANK YOU TO ALL THAT ATTENDED
WHAT AN AMAZING GROUP OF PASSIONATE CARING PEOPLE!



SAVE OUR BIRTH CENTRE!

Discussion summary - written communication



♥ Letters/emails can be written to 2DHB Board members, 2DHB CE and Health Ministers (see names and contact details below).

♥ Points to consider in written letters/emails/social media posts:

- Be clear this is a "fundamental women's health issue".
- Where is the consumer engagement from HVDHB (*not just tick-box*)?
- Primary birthing room is not the same as a standalone birth centre.
- Having primary birthing options by 2023? - what happens in the meantime for birthing whānau?
- Cultural safety - where is the appropriate support in the hospital?
- Statistics show that where Māori women have choice, they are more likely to choose birth in a primary birthing setting away from hospital.
- Do DHB decision makers know *and understand* the overwhelming research in support of primary birthing?
- DHB obligations under the Ministry of Health Maternity Specifications for Primary Maternity Facilities and the New Zealand Maternity Standards are NOT being met.
- Primary birth SAVES money in the short and long-term!
- The importance of the first 1000 days of a baby's life is promoted by Government and DHB, but this is not happening at DHB level.
- High levels of stress and trauma are being experienced by birthing whānau, midwives and other maternity staff.
- Clinical safety - hospital often going into code red, primary birth is safe, postnatal women feeling neglected in hospital due to understaffing .

♥ 5 strong points to focus on / use in media:

- **BIRTH TRAUMA** experienced within the hospital and the mental health repercussions of that trauma. Also linking back to the importance of the **1st 1000 days**.
- **DHB OBLIGATIONS** DHB are not meeting obligations to provide a primary care unit. They have said 2 x rooms will be ready in 2023.... argue that we can keep the birth centre open to meet that need.
- **CULTURAL SAFETY** many birthing people do not feel safe giving birth in a place where whānau have died and other traumas suffered.
- **FINANCIAL SAVINGS** short + long-term.
- **EVIDENCE** shows that birthing in a primary care unit is safe for those who are pregnant and healthy, with low risk.

HUTT
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FOR
MIDWIVES

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Discussion summary - Social Media and Physical Action



- ♥ **Love heart campaign** - create a giant heart and place it in your window in support of the Birth Centre. Send a photo of it to Hutt Families for Midwives to share on social media (*similar to the "Teddy Bears in the windows" during 2020 lockdown*).
- ♥ Flood the internet with **birth centre stories and quotes about primary birthing**.
- ♥ Save the date - Tuesday 24th August - if we are in a lower Covid alert level by this date, a **physical protest/show of support** will be organised e.g. people encircling the Birth Centre.



Visit us at facebook.com/huttfamiliesformidwives - share our posts widely



On Instagram @huttfamiliesformidwives



Use hashtags #birthcentreourchoice #savemellingbc #teawakairangi

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Discussion summary - General Discussion



- ♥ **Midwives are feeling "at a loss"** because they feel they've tried everything to have a voice, but MoH and DHB are not hearing and acting. Work feels very disjointed currently with not knowing what is going to happen. **ACTION:** community needs to keep publically **supporting midwives**.
- ♥ Questions such as: *Why is the Birth Centre Underutilised?, What is the difference between an "ordinary" midwife and LMC midwives in community?* Clarification that underutilisation of Birth Centre is NOT due to lack of want but because the DHB does not promote and educate about the clinical safety of primary birth and there is *now* no choice due to low LMC midwife numbers working due to years of under-funding, and due to risk criteria challenges. This causes much **anxiety, hurt and frustration to birthing whānau**. **ACTION:** Group will create **FAQs** to enable understanding and to counter misinformation in the media and from CE of DHB and other sources. Investigate how many midwives are still in Hutt who have left profession (*but could return with a fabulous package and workplace to come back to?!*)
- ♥ Birth Centre is important **learning ground for new midwives**, and a **base for LMC midwives** to be able to offer primary birth options to whānau and to hold their clinics and education sessions.
- ♥ **Funding** - questions and discussions around what it costs to run the Birth Centre and how could we (the community) fund it? Do not want to create inequity (only wealthy can pay), but are there other models that would work?
- ♥ **Momentum is building** and the midwives see a greater knowledge of and use of the Birth Centre as word-of-mouth shares how positive it is to birth at the Centre - demand is growing as a result. It is only been around for 3 years with no active support from local DHB. **ACTION: Share good outcomes/statistics and Birth Centre stories.**
- ♥ **Birth and postnatal education and support groups** run from Birth Centre - what happens to them?
- ♥ If we cannot stop the closure, **could final decision/end date be pushed out?** It is busiest time of year with Christmas/NY conceptions! The HVDHB will not have their refurbishment ready until at least 2023?

SAVE OUR BIRTH CENTRE!

Our Community has made it very clear that
we **NEED** Te Awakairangi Birth Centre!



TOP FIVE COMMUNITY ACTIONS:

1. **COLLECTIVE COMMUNICATION** - working together to share our concerns and community needs with the DHB and Health Ministers.
2. **FAQs DOCUMENT** - that covers questions that keep coming up and **dispels** the **misinformation** that is being disseminated.
3. **SHARE BIRTH CENTRE STORIES** and work experiences from there to highlight the community need to have a standalone primary birthing space.
4. **EVIDENCE PAPER** - a paper that summarises the overwhelming body of research that supports primary birthing environments, in particular stand-alone units.
5. **PROTEST** - physical protests when we are in lower alert levels, and social media campaigns throughout including "Love Hearts in our Windows".

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Get writing letters/emails/posts on social media (list of DHB/Ministry contacts attached)!

Share your birth stories - see our Facebook page for details, or email them to us.

Sign and share our petition!

Love Hearts in our Windows - create a giant love heart that supports our Birth Centre, pop it in your window, then take a photo and send it through to us to share on social media.

Save the date - Tuesday 24 August - if alert levels drop in time, there will be a physical presence at the Birth Centre in support on this date.

Follow our social media for updates, and share our posts far and wide.

Actively participate - the time is NOW! Participate in any or all of these suggested actions - or come up with your own! LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!



He waka eke noa.
We are all in this together.

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**Names and (some) contacts of people
to direct correspondence to:**

HEALTH MINISTER

Hon Andrew Little - a.little@ministers.govt.nz

ASSOCIATE HEALTH MINISTER

Hon Ayesha Verrall - a.verrall@ministers.govt.nz

2DHB CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Fionnagh Dougan - Fionnagh.Dougan@ccandhvdhbs.health.nz

2DHB DIRECTOR PROVIDER SERVICES

Joy Farley - Joy.Farley@ccdhb.org.nz



**Many elected and appointed
DHB Board members have a
social media presence - so find
ways to contact them**

HUTT VALLEY DHB BOARD MEMBERS

*Not all are available but try
firstname.lastname@huttvalleydhb.org.nz*

David Smol -2DHB Chair- david.smol@huttvalleydhb.org.nz

Wayne Guppy - Wayne.Guppy@uhcc.govt.nz

Josh Briggs - josh@joshbriggs.co.nz

Keri Brown - keri.brown@huttcity.govt.nz

Yvette Grace - (appointed) yvette.grace@huttvalleydhb.org.nz

Ken Laban - ken.laban@gw.govt.nz, kenlaban@outlook.com

John Ryall - (appointed) john.ryall@huttvalleydhb.org.nz

Naomi Shaw - naomi@softball.org.nz

Prue Lamason - pruelamason@gmail.com

Richard Stein - rstein@richardsteinmd.com

CAPITAL & COAST DHB BOARD MEMBERS

Not all are available but try firstname.lastname@ccdhb.org.nz

David Smol - 2DHB Chair - david.smol@ccdhb.org.nz

Stacey Shortall (Deputy Chair) - ??? (appointed) stacey.shortall@ccdhb.org.nz

'Ana Coffey - anamcoffey@gmail.com

Brendan Boyle - ??? (appointed) brendan.boyle@ccdhb.org.nz

Chris Kalderimis - chriskalderimis@hotmail.com

Hamiora Bowkett - ??? (appointed) hamiora.bowkett@ccdhb.org.nz

Kathryn Adams - kathryn@actrix.co.nz

Roger Blakeley - roger.blakeley@outlook.com

Sue Kedgley - sue@suekedgley.com

Tristram Ingham - ??? (appointed) tristram.ingham@ccdhb.org.nz

Vanessa Simpson - vanessaforccdhb@gmail.com



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**Names and (some) contacts of people
to direct correspondence to:**

LABOUR PARTY

Arena Williams - arena.williams@parliament.govt.nz

Camilla Belich - camilla.belich@parliament.govt.nz

Helen White - helen.white@parliament.govt.nz

Liz Craig - liz.craig@parliament.govt.nz

Sarah Pallett - sarah.pallett@parliament.govt.nz

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Jan Tinetti - jan.tinetti@parliament.govt.nz

NATIONAL PARTY

Nicola Grigg - nicola.grigg@parliament.govt.nz (*Spokesperson for Women*)

Nicola Willis - nicola.willis@parliament.govt.nz

GREEN PARTY

Elizabeth Kerekere - elizabeth.kerekereMP@parliament.govt.nz

Jan Logie - jan.logie@greens.org.nz

