Improving identification of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander babies in mainstream maternity services (Vic)

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Maternity Services Education Program
The Royal Women’s Hospital

- Nine years of interdisciplinary, tailored maternity emergency and pregnancy care education – rural and regional Victoria

- Since 2011, partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) and the Koori Maternity Services (KMS):
  - Pregnancy care education for KMS Aboriginal Health Workers and midwives
  - Cultural safety in maternity care education for selected maternity services

- In 2014: Working with Aboriginal Health teams at Sunshine & Echuca Regional Health (and more). Resources and guidelines to support systems change to improve identification of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander babies in Victoria
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies under-identified by 30-40%.

2009 = maternity services started collecting data on non-Aboriginal mums with Aboriginal babies.

Birth data provide the denominator for the calculation rates for the Aboriginal population in Vic.
Recommendations

- Education

- Continued system enhancement for collecting good data

- Resources such as posters and pamphlets

- Use data to start conversations within the hospital – feedback to staff and community

- Policies and procedures
Cultural respect and celebrates complexity of identities

Understands reasons for asking the question and is confident to ask

"Is your baby of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Origin?"

Understands referral pathways and offers them to women

Understands data collection and documentation process

- Welcoming and culturally friendly environment
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff
- Showcase Aboriginal culture
- Cultural awareness training
- Whole of organisation commitment
- Policies and procedures

- Access training focused on asking the question - i.e. AIHW package covering 7 basic competencies
- Brochures and prompts at reception and other points where question to be asked
- Importance of asking question about mum and baby included in orientation and embedded into other sessions/meetings.

- Referral pathways documented
- High profile Aboriginal Unit/Liaison Officer
- Strong partnership with Koori Maternity Service/culturally safe services
- Staff training

- Data collection system facilitates collection of high quality data
- Resources developed to assist staff collecting Aboriginal status
- Feedback to staff regarding data quality and outcomes/needs of local families
Resources to be launched in February 2015

- Updates to Birthing Outcomes System (BOS)
- Staff training resource
- Poster
- Cot cards
- Banner
- Policy and Procedures
Welcome

Hi, my name is ____________________________
Parent/s _________________________________
Birthday ____________________ Time ____________
Sex ________________ Birth Weight ____________
Length ________________ Head Circumference ______
Midwife/s ________________________________
Doctor ___________________________________
Hospital __________________________________

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Data collection:
Changes to Birthing Outcomes System

- Data fields to support question about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status of baby to be asked at booking in (some currently have father’s status, suggestion for it to be mother and baby) AND after birth

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status more prominent in BOS once data entered (i.e. displayed in antenatal summary)

- Alert when ‘question unable to be asked’ or ‘patient refused to answer’ entered in previous session (also recommended as an education opportunity for staff)

- Including Aboriginal status of mum baby in statistics – i.e. Obstetric Statistics Audit Report
Data collection: Changes to BOS

- Update Victorian Maternity Record in BOS (and outside of BOS – TBC with DoH) so that baby’s status can be recorded
- Change data entry fields to reflect appropriate Vic terminology (“Aboriginal”, not “Indigenous”)
- Aboriginal status to be included as standard in documents such as:
  - antenatal booking record
  - antenatal summary and management plan
  - Birthing clinical summary
  - Obstetric discharge summary
  - MCHN letter
  - Neonatal or SCN discharge summary

Recognising that privacy is paramount

- How can BOS be utilised to better support role of AHLO (recognising importance of consent to refer and share details)?
Change in legislation required
Suggestions from project group

- Educate midwives on the issue – encourage them to have conversations with families in maternity unit on importance of registering birth (in partnership with AHLO/KMS where appropriate).

- One page flyer for Aboriginal families in Parent Pack:
  - Why register baby?
  - Why identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?
  - It is free to register baby
  - Financial assistance is available to access a certificate
  - Koori Liaison Officers available at BDM Vic

- Maternal Child Health Nurses, GPs, Koori Maternity Services and Best Start workers reinforce message
Barb Gibson-Thorpe
Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer
Echuca Regional Health

Jacqueline Watkins
Manager, Aboriginal Health Policy and Planning
Western Health

VACCHO and Koori Maternity Service teams

Aboriginal Health Branch, Department of Health

Project reference group
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AIHW Existing Resources

- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

- Staff training tool (quiz with scenarios)
- NIDISC (AIHW National Indigenous Data Improvement Support Centre) helpdesk:
  Tel. 1800 223 919  Email: nidisc@aihw.gov.au
- Brochures for women explaining why we ask question
- Brochures and posters for staff
- Best practice guidelines
Australian Health Ministers’ Advisory Council (2012) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework 2012 Report, AHMAC, Canberra

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2011) Characteristics of culturally competent maternity services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2010), National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets, Cat. No. IHW 29, Canberra

Department of Health and Ageing (2013) National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan, Canberra
