



Hon Lawrence Springborg MP
Minister for Health

28 MAY 2013

Mr Neil Laurie
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Dear Mr Laurie

I write in response to your letter regarding petition number 2086-13 tabled in Parliament on 30 April 2013, in relation to the request to adequately staff the Ipswich Midwifery Group Practice so that all low risk women can continue to access continuity of midwifery care with all its health benefits to mothers and babies.

By way of background, I note the Ipswich Hospital Midwifery Group Practice is based on the midwife-led caseload model, where women receive their antenatal, birthing and postnatal care through a primary allocated midwife. This model is consistent with similar midwifery-led models both within Queensland and nationally. The service commenced in 2007 with two midwives and currently has a staffing allocation of six midwives. In December 2012, the Ipswich Hospital Midwifery Group Practice celebrated their 1,000 birth milestone.

I have been assured that the Ipswich Hospital Midwifery Group Practice program will remain available to eligible women, including those with low risk pregnancies.

More recently, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women aged under 18 have also been provided for in this service. While the inclusion of these women has increased the demand, I have been assured that no further changes will be made until the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service develops a future plan for midwifery services and pursues opportunities to increase midwifery-led models.

The West Moreton Hospital and Health Service's commitment to developing midwifery models has been demonstrated with private practice midwives recently being granted permission to admit and birth women within the hospital setting.

While it is acknowledged that West Moreton Hospital and Health Service may not be able to offer this service to every woman, its goal is to ensure their midwives provide a safe and midwife-led birth experience to the region's women.

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely



LAWRENCE SPRINGBORG MP
Minister for Health