

Report - Bronwen Felvin, Nelson.

1987 was a really difficult year for me. I began the year feeling drained and energy-less and very soon developed extreme anxiety and insomnia for the first time in my life. I was able to drop my other work commitments and concentrate on midwifery and this enabled me to reduce my stress level considerably especially with the reduced number of bookings I had. Chris Voaden also had a period of time away from midwifery which left me feeling quite isolated. About one third of the women I dealt with was transferred to Nelson hospital with varying complications. Towards the end of the year, one of the homebirth babies I'd been involved with died at 7½ weeks of 'cot' death. Two weeks later, I attended a prolonged labour where the baby suffered oxygen deprivation and is possibly brain damaged - time will tell. The following day, a friend and fellow member of Riverside Community, hadcasfully pregnant after seven years and investigations of infertility, had a stillborn baby boy after a placental abruption at 35 weeks. Although tragic situations, I feel privileged to have shared them and feel that I have gained so much insight into this thing we call life. I have learned that I'm not frightened of either birth or death, the two experiences that unite us all to our common humanity. And that I'm a good person to have around at either time because I'm not frightened and that brings reassurance and comfort. And I feel happy and satisfied to take on that role.

Numbers are as follows:

26 bookings
18 homebirths
8 transfers to hospital

Reasons for transfers:-

pre-eclamptic toxæmia - LSCS at 34 weeks
prematurity, 35 weeks - normal birth
2nd stage, no progress - forceps
2nd stage, foetal distress - forceps
breech, extended legs - elective LSCS
1st stage, POP, no progress - LSCS
abrupted placenta, 35 weeks - LSCS, stillbirth
breech, extended legs, no
progress, 1st stage - LSCS

* 1988 bodes well. So far, 10 homebirths including one previous LSCS woman (had toxæmia last year!!) as well as labour support for

another previous LSCS who ended up going into hospital for another one. And a whole month's holiday - off around the South Island visiting friends. Which leaves me feeling refreshed and ready for the onslaught while Chris is away for the middle term.

Bronwen
