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1990/91 Domiciliary Midwives Report

by Terryll Muir.

I had most of 1990 off with maternity leave to have my 4th child - Jacob - finally I managed to have a Home Birth, it was great, a little quick though!

I began 1991 with a steady caseload for me, baby & family. 10 bookings, I have had 4 births so far. 2 of these were primigravidas, both births went really well.

Out of the 10, only 4 of the women have been able to get their GP to look after them throughout pregnancy, birth & postnatally (there were only 2 doctors involved in the care of these women)

I am providing total care for one woman, this is the first total care I have been asked to care for.

The remaining 5 women are all being seen antenatally by their GP. Not one of these GP's is willing to follow through with care for a Home Birth, 2 said that they would come if called to an emergency only and the other 3 refuse to come even if called.

I am unhappy about being at a birth on my own without any back up to call on, keeping in mind that out of the 10 bookings only 1 is in an urban area, the other 9 are 3/4 - 1 1/2 hrs away from the base hospital.

I don't believe the changes in the act have released the GP's from responsibility of providing care if the woman asks for it especially when they have been providing antenatal care - when I pointed this out to one GP he said we were blackmailing him and along with a few 'not-so-nice' comments about my competence, threatened to cease providing any care what-so-ever to the woman involved.

In these instances when I find myself without any support I have been employing the support of an R.N to assist me.

So far I have looked after 2 women under a domino contract. I have been given permission to work in all

AHB institutions in Southland, they are in the process of drawing up new contracts. In both instances the midwives have been really great, the doctors have been more of a stumbling block - reluctantly co-operative!

I am still travelling long distances to most births, 70-100 km each way.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

We are just about to have our 2nd peer review, the first went well and achieved its purpose successfully, even a much improved relationship with the PPHW (I'm lost on new titles) I have been nominated onto the obstetrics review committee for the AHB, with midwives now having contracts the committee has taken 2 midwives onto it. It will be interesting to see the difference, if any, between the 2 reviews.

There are 2 of us offering a full time domiciliary service in Southland, there are a few others registered but providing a limited service only.

Maternity care still receives a lot of publicity in Southland, 2 County Maternity Homes closed by the cutbacks in health spending have re-opened due to public demand and financial support. One has re-opened as a Maternity Home, the other a birthing unit.

I am running antenatal classes on a full-time basis in Invercargill, these are open to all women, partners & support people. I am enjoying the challenge but I'm finding in the majority of cases the midwife present during labour has more effect than me on the outcome of birth. The women are prepared but need the encouragement of the

midwife at the time, maybe we should be running antenatal classes for midwives as well!

The ^{Southland} Home Birth Association is finally getting off the ground and achieving more than just coffee mornings. It is really great to see the women putting the effort back into the group and setting ~~themselves~~ ^{themselves} better goals.

Sorry I can't be with you this weekend but I have 3 women due. Hope to make it next year. Have a great weekend!

Terryl.