

Birth group given home

The Birth and Beyond group, which is setting up a parent resource and out-of-hospital birth centre in Wellington, has been given premises by the Wellington Hospital Board.

Situated at 38 Owen Street, in Newtown, the large five-bedroom house will become available later this year and will require a minimum of alteration for the group's needs.

A spokesman for the group, Ms Joan Skinner, said the house will be used for births, ante-natal and post-natal classes and as a source of parent support.

The group has been functioning for over a year now, and aims to present the centre as an alternative to existing birth services, providing comprehensive maternity care in a home-like at-

mosphere based on early discharge and follow-up care at home.

The facilities will be for those families, said Ms Skinner, who do not wish to involve high technology as a part of their birth ritual.

Midwives and support personnel, in consultation with medical practitioners, will provide care and birthing assistance.

Ms Skinner said the centre will cater for "low-risk" women who have participated in ante-natal screening and are anticipating a normal birth.

The centre is looking for new members and anyone interested in joining is asked to attend the annual general meeting, which will be held at Crossways, on the corner of Brougham and Elizabeth Streets, at 8pm on April 30.