Government Delivers New Birth Centre

The Chief Minister Clare Martin and the Health Minister Chris Burns today officially opened a $2.5 million Birth Centre at Royal Darwin Hospital.

The Chief Minister said the Birth Centre would give Darwin women more choice.

“This Birth Centre will provide a great alternative to the Delivery Suite on the 6th floor at RDH,” said Ms Martin.

“It has a friendly environment with an emphasis on midwifery-led care for those who don’t need medical intervention during childbirth.”

Expectant mums receiving care through the Community Midwifery Practice (CMP) will be eligible to give birth at the centre from next month.

Pregnant woman can access education material and ante-natal information at the centre through their CMP midwife from next week.

Dr Burns said the establishment of the centre underlines the Territory Government’s commitment to birthing services.

“When indemnity insurance for midwives ceased in 2003, the Government stepped in and employed some of those midwives, ensuring Territory women continued to have access to a midwifery model of care,” he said.

“The Territory Government also established a new home for the Community Midwifery Practice at Casuarina. The Birth Centre is an extension of the practice in a specialised location. It will run in tandem with the CMP’s headquarters on Trower Road.”

The centre includes two low-tech, family-friendly birthing rooms with deep-water baths for pain relief; consultation rooms; education and training rooms, and an outside courtyard.
where families can relax.

Dr Burns said the centre will be staffed by the five midwives who work with the Community Midwifery Practice. They are expected to deal with about 225 births a year.

The Territory Government is currently conducting a review of all maternity services, including homebirthing, in the Territory.

Dr Burns said the Birth Centre is part of the Government’s plan to upgrade programs, services and infrastructure at Royal Darwin Hospital.

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