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Baby Friendly hospital Accreditation for Gove District Hospital

Dr Chris Burns MLA
Acting Minister for Health

The Australian College of Midwives National Executive has approved Baby Friendly Hospital accreditation for the Gove District Hospital.

It is the second hospital in the Territory to gain the accreditation after the Katherine Hospital and is one of only 51 similarly accredited hospitals in Australia.

“This fantastic achievement is the culmination of two years of determined and motivated effort by the midwives of the hospital’s maternity unit,” Acting Health Minister Dr Chris Burns said today.

“Their efforts and the accreditation ensure families birthing in East Arnhem are receiving high-quality education, care and support as they explore their options on how best to feed their newborn infants.

“This accreditation has been achieved through the extraordinary support of East Arnhem mothers who participated in surveys, statistical data collection and the implementation of strategies and policies.

“Also to be commended is the tireless efforts of the Gove District Hospital management team – in particular Jane Blake, the hospital’s dedicated midwife who drove the project.”

The Baby friendly Hospital initiative was launched in 1991 by UNICEF and the World Health Organisation (WHO), aiming to create health care environments that promote breastfeeding.

It involves several strategies including intense staff education on breastfeeding and infant feeding; ante natal education to pregnant mothers to enable them to make informed choices on infant feeding; practical education and assistance for breastfeeding mothers, and advice on support resources for new mothers.

The accreditation follows the comprehensive new maternity services package announced by the Government in November.

The package offers support, quality service and choice for mothers and includes the consolidation of the Community Midwifery Program, support for home births, provision of training for midwives and doctors, and an outreach ante-natal service to remote communities.