

MEDIA RELEASE



**The Royal Australian
and New Zealand
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and Gynaecologists**

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College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists has Concerns about Home Birth Study

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG) has concerns about the results of the new South Australian study, reported in this week's Australian Medical Journal (MJA). The results of the study show higher risks for perinatal deaths associated with home births when compared to hospital births.

'This study raises again significant concerns about the safety of home births', said RANZCOG President, Dr Ted Weaver.

'We should be very careful when changing current systems of maternity care, as we are presently working towards with the Maternity Services review, that we do not compromise the safety for both the mother and baby and potentially have disastrous outcomes for families', said Dr Weaver today.

'Women do need the care of an obstetrician, either a specialist, or GP obstetrician, working in cooperation with other maternity service providers in a multidisciplinary team to provide optimal care, and most choice, to meet a woman's needs during pregnancy. Fortunately, most obstetricians in Australia are committed to working collaboratively with the other caregivers in maternity services, to try to ensure a level of care that is safe, feels safe, is women-centred and culturally appropriate. The fact that women choose to give birth at home, because they feel they cannot get what they want in hospital is a concern that should be addressed.'

'It is essential that all health workers providing maternity health services, work together to provide the best outcomes for mothers and babies. Trust and cooperation between all those involved in maternity care is vital to the provision of safe maternity care, especially if women are transferred to hospital after an attempted homebirth, as evidenced by the MJA article', said Dr Weaver.

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG) is dedicated to maintaining the highest possible standards in obstetrics and gynaecology in Australia and New Zealand.

To view the College's official statement on home births:
<http://www.ranzcof.edu.au/publications/statements/C-obs2.pdf>

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