
What is the project about?

This recently funded 4 year NHMRC project is driven by the belief that maternity services must ensure a culturally secure environment with culturally competent staff safeguarding the birthing woman’s cultural rights, values and expectations; and respecting her right to feel culturally safe. We will be asking the following broad questions:

1. What is it that Aboriginal women want and expect from maternity health services?
2. What do Aboriginal women consider is ‘cultural competence’ of midwives involved in their birth experience - what does it look and feel like?
3. What does a “gold standard” level of care for the diversity of cultural birthing needs of Aboriginal women in urban locations look like?
The philosophy of Birthing on Country is central to the study and it is understood that: *Birthing on Country* ensures a spiritual connection to the land for an Aboriginal mother and her baby.

**Who is in the team?**

The research team is led by Professor Rhonda Marriott from the Centre for Aboriginal Health Research Centre based at Kulbardi, Murdoch University and includes leading Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal researchers from Murdoch University, Curtin University and Telethon Kids Institute. The research collaboration also includes midwives, health workers, midwifery educators and clinical managers from organisations such as: Moort Boodjari Mia, Derbarl Yerrigan, St John of God, Mercy Care and the Ramsay Group as well as two international scholars from Canada and the UK.

An Aboriginal Consultative Group made up of Aboriginal Health Professionals, Health Service Managers, Health Workers and Community Leaders as well as a Steering Group of 13 partner organisations will provide guidance and advice throughout the research process.

**Who are our participants?**

Aboriginal Elders, Aboriginal health professionals and Aboriginal women who are attending maternity services as well as midwives, midwife educators, senior clinical and administrative staff providing care in Perth. Please contact Dr Jenny Dodd, a researcher at Centre for Aboriginal Health Research, Murdoch University by email: j.dodd@murdoch.edu.au or phone: 93606745 if you want to know more about the study, want to participate, or can help us promote the study.