

Please attribute to a Western Sydney Local Health District spokesperson:

Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD) is dedicated to providing quality and safe care to everyone from western Sydney, including mothers and babies.

The death of a baby is a tragedy and our thoughts and condolences are with the families affected by these losses.

Support is provided to women and their families in the weeks and months afterwards, including counselling, social work assistance and meetings with senior clinicians to answer any questions or address any concerns they may have.

Access for bereaved women and their families to a social work professional ensures that continuing emotional and psychological support and care is available.

WSLHD follows a rigorous process to ensure we identify, investigate and learn from any incidents that occur in our hospitals. All unexpected deaths in our hospitals are thoroughly investigated with a Root Cause Analysis which, if required, comes with recommendations for implementation. We keep families informed and provide bereavement support throughout this process.

The resilience assessment of maternity services, conducted by Professor Michael Nicholl NSW Health Senior Clinical Advisor, Obstetrics, and the Clinical Excellence Commission was a district wide assessment of the service. It was not an investigation into any specific cases.

The assessment had a specific focus on services in Auburn, Blacktown and Westmead hospitals. It considered a range of factors including service capability, safety systems, clinical governance, leadership, culture and models of care.

We are grateful for this independent, expert advice to support and strengthen our clinical services.

Of the 18 recommendations originating from the resilience assessment, 12 have been completed, with the remaining six in progress and anticipated to be completed in early 2022.

As part of these recommendations, all facilities across WSLHD have initiated safety huddles and clinical handovers as key communication mechanisms to proactively escalate safety concerns and ensure continuity of patient care.

Recruitment at Blacktown Hospital has secured an additional 19.3 FTE midwives, five FTE nurses are being upskilled in midwifery, a birthing suite midwifery unit manager and clinical nurse educator to support care and staff after hours. WSLHD has also supplied Blacktown Hospital maternity services with more than seven FTE additional nurses to support the delivery of patient care while active recruitment remains ongoing.

A review of all local obstetrics and gynaecology policies and procedures has been completed in WSLHD and an additional night shift registrar position has been established as part of the staffing profile at Blacktown and Mount Druitt Hospitals.

We strive to ensure the best possible outcomes of care for the people of Western Sydney at our hospitals, including the community's newest and most precious arrivals.