

There has been missed opportunity to engage and provide antenatal care to women with complex and multiple psychosocial risks who present to Emergency Departments in the Central Highlands, including Emerald and Blackwater Hospitals..

The **Emergency Department – Antenatal Fast Track Referral Pathway** creates opportunities to engage high risk and vulnerable pregnant women early, establish trust, and connect them with ongoing culturally safe, trauma informed maternity care.

Promotes earlier intervention and improved maternal and neonatal outcomes.

BARRIERS

- Limited access to GPs and bulk billing maternity services
- Inadequate public transport
- Changing demographic of residents in the Central Highlands and limited services available to support women and families
- Improving connections with vulnerable women and families accessing health services to support safe maternity care
- First Nations women may experience barriers to accessing maternity services due to previous negative healthcare experiences, fear of judgement and lack of culturally safe care

IMPROVING ACCESS

- Early intervention to identify and support women with medical, obstetric and psychosocial risk factors
- Equitable access to antenatal care and ongoing support for all pregnant women in the Central Highlands
- Recognising opportunities to deliver trauma-informed approaches in pregnancy care
- Building trusting relationships through culturally safe, women-centred care supports earlier engagement and improved health outcomes

OUTCOMES

- Prioritise a sense of safety, collaboration and relationship building for pregnant women in all interactions with health
- Exploring opportunities to integrate trauma-informed care into pregnancy and post natal support
- New referral pathway between the Emergency Department and maternity services
- Identified the need of an identified Midwife Navigator in the Central Highlands who provides advocacy, continuity and culturally responsive support to strengthen connections between women, families and maternity services
- Safer pregnancies, birth and neonatal outcomes for women across the Central Highlands

PATIENT EXPERIENCE

Patient story of experience using the **ED-AN Fast Track Referral** and Identified Midwife Navigator service.

“When I first met you, you was all talks and laughs.

I never ever met a midwife like that before, I can say you were the best ever ❤️ you brang the true colours out of me that day and I appreciate that .. you are always there to talk to when I needed 🥺 every time I see you I get happy cause it feels like already know you like we're family 🍷 ☺️”

Beverley

