

BIRTHING ON COUNTRY: RISE SAFELY in RURAL AUSTRALIA

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

PROJECT TITLE	Birthing On Country: Rise Safely in Rural Australia
HREC REFERENCE NUMBER:	AH&MRC HREC (Reference: 2185/23)
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	Prof Yvette Roe, Prof Sue Kildea, A/Prof Elaine L�wurrpa Maypilama, Prof Roianne West, Dr Sarah Ireland, A/Prof Yu Gao, Prof Sue Kruske
ASSOCIATE INVESTIGATORS	Ms Melanie Briggs, Ms Cleone Wellington, Ms Faye Worner, Dr Rebecca Coddington, Ms Kathleen Taylor
INSTITUTION RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RESEARCH	Molly Wardaguga Research Centre, Charles Darwin University
PROJECT SPONSOR/FUNDER	Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF), The Australian Federal Government
SITE	Waminda South Coast Women’s Health and Wellbeing Aboriginal Corporation

What is the project about?

The project is about studying Australia’s ‘Birthing on Country’ rural demonstration site at Waminda South Coast Women’s Health and Wellbeing Aboriginal Corporation (Waminda) in Nowra, New South Wales. The local Aboriginal community have been working with health service providers to redesign (change) maternity health services to better meet the needs of Aboriginal women and families who are accessing care at Waminda. Service redesign has focused on increasing continuity of midwifery care (seeing the same midwife for pregnancy and birth care) and quality of care by making it easier for services to connect and work well together.

This research is funded by the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) Improving the Health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mothers and Babies grant from the Australian Federal Government. This grant aims to promote the best start to life for First Nations children and families by transforming maternity care systems.

The project will start in 2024 and finish in 2027.

Who is doing the research?

Researchers from the Molly Wardaguga Research Centre, Charles Darwin University are doing this research in partnership with Waminda. The research team are Prof Yvette Roe, Prof Sue Kildea, A/Prof Elaine L wurrpa Maypilama, Prof Roianne West, Dr Sarah Ireland, A/Prof Yu Gao, Prof Sue Kruske, Ms Melanie Briggs, Ms Cleone Wellington, Ms Faye Worner, Dr Rebecca Coddington and Ms Kathleen Taylor.

Why me?

We are inviting you to be part of the research because we value your expertise, knowledge, and experiences in maternity care. We want to understand more about your ideas on providing better care for Aboriginal women and families.

What is involved if I participate?

If you would like to participate, you will be asked to sign an informed consent form before any research begins. We will ask you to share your stories, knowledge, and experiences of maternity care. You can talk to researchers by yourself or in a group. If you agree to share your stories, knowledge and experiences we will ask you for permission to take notes and make digital recordings in the form of voice recordings. If English is not your first language, we can work with an interpreter and make it easier for us to communicate between languages.

Participants will be offered the opportunity to review their interview transcript within 14 days of the interview and will have the option to erase any information they no longer wish to be included in the study. Participants will also be given the opportunity to review draft research findings to provide feedback to the research team and ensure the findings accurately reflect their views and experiences. How this data is returned to participants will be in the format the participant chooses, for example, face-to-face or email. This is in line with Aboriginal data sovereignty practices.

What happens if I don't want to participate in the project?

You can say "no" if you don't want to talk with us. It's also okay if you say "yes" and later decide to withdraw – you can say "no" at any time and no bad feelings will come of it. If you withdraw late in the project, information you shared with us may still be used without your name. If you withdraw, this will not affect your current or future employment and/or access to health services. Withdrawing will not impact your relationships with anyone such as Waminda staff, your employer, supervisors, colleagues, the project partner organisations or the researchers.

Are there any dangers (risks) or worries I should know about?

There are no physical dangers (risks) from participating in the project. There is a small risk of emotional distress.

If you share any stories or experiences that make you feel sad or upset, the researchers will be caring and show you respect. If you become really upset, we can stop talking and the researchers will offer the support of family/friends and if needed show you where to get help from the local health services.

You may also be worried about sharing cultural or workplace knowledge that needs to be looked after carefully. Researchers will talk with you about how we use and protect the information you share and take note of how you would like it to be used.

For cultural knowledge, researchers will respect continued Aboriginal ownership of Aboriginal knowledge. Researchers will seek advice and final approval from the Waminda Cultural Committee for public use of Aboriginal knowledge. Researchers will always do their best to respect and follow local Aboriginal knowledge protocols.

How are my identity and stories looked after?

It's your decision if you would like to be publicly named and identified as a participant. If you want to remain anonymous, that's okay, we will not share your name or identifying information about you with anyone.

We will keep your stories and information in a safe locked place at Charles Darwin University accessible only to authorised members of the research team, and on password protected hard drives at the Molly Wardaguga Research Centre SharePoint, where it is backed up on a secure network server every 24 hours. It will be destroyed after five years.

If you participate in group sessions, we will do our very best to protect your confidentiality but there is a small chance that other people in the group could reveal your identity to others outside of the group. If we work with an interpreter, they will hear your stories. Interpreters follow strict rules in their work to keep your information private and not share it with anyone.

What happens to the results?

We will use the results to change maternity health services to better meet the needs of First Nations women and families.

Researchers will negotiate with project governance groups and the Waminda Cultural Committee about the best ways to document and give back this information to the community and stakeholders. Final project outcomes will be reported to stakeholders and community to support service planning and decision making.

The research may also use results to share deep stories about the project at conferences, and journal articles. You can ask for copies of these and might like to be part of writing or presenting them.

Who can I contact for questions or concerns?

If you have any questions or concerns about the research project, contact Sue Kildea via email sue.kildea@cdu.edu.au or phone 0418 289 199.

If you have any questions or concerns that you do not want to direct to the project manager, or if you have a complaint, you can contact:

The Chairperson
AH&MRC Ethics Committee
Harvey Street Little Bay
NSW 2036 Australia
Email: ethics@ahmrc.org.au
Telephone: (02) 9212 4777

The ethics team can pass on any concerns to appropriate officers within the university.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this study. This participant information sheet is for you to keep.

