



Towards Healthy Families

WINTER 2018

Ija Mulanggari, Goodtha Mulanggari
Thriving Mothers, Thriving Babies



Presidents message

Warming winter wishes to you all.

Many of you will already be aware of the very difficult and protracted negotiations CMS has had with the ACT Government Health Directorate in relation to the QEII Operating Agreement. Despite the high level of uncertainty, CMS, in good faith, continues to operate QEII, and to demonstrate our unstinting commitment to this important service and by extension the Canberra community.

The CMS Board is monitoring the risks that the current situation presents. Unfortunately, as we go to press, the terms of the Agreement remain unresolved, and the Board is to meet with the Minister for Health and Wellbeing, Ms Megan Fitzharris, at the end of August.

It was somewhat ironic then that CMS had the honour to feature as ArchiveACT's July "Find of the Month". Under the title "Bringing up baby 90 years of the Canberra Mothercraft Society", and among the recollection of CMS milestones, the piece also included some fabulous photographs. One of my personal favourites is that of a Meeting at the Baby Health Centre, Molonglo Settlement, Eastlake, 1928. A group of almost

30 women and children, skirts blown taut around legs and hats firmly held as they braved that wind swept plain. It made me proud to think, once again, of those resilient founders of the Society.



"Throughout its long history, The Canberra Mothercraft Society has had a huge impact on the health and welfare of the Territory's parents and children and has endured to become the Territory's longest running health service."

I'm sure you will join me in acknowledging the Life Membership awarded to Mary Kirk, QEII Director of Nursing and Midwifery/ Executive Officer by The Australian College of Midwives. This award is testimony to the skill, intellect, ability and dedication that Mary has brought and continues to bring to her profession. The Board extends heartfelt congratulations to Mary.

In closing I invite you all to join the CMS Family for a Night out in November. We have a block booking at the Canberra Theatre for *The Wharf Revue*, Friday 02 November. Tickets are on sale at the QEII reception until 31 August.

Fiona Smith du Toit

Save the date: 2018 Annual General Meeting

The 2018 Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 21st November 2018 at the Helleic Club, Woden. A formal notice will be issued to CMS members closer to the date.

Hydrangeas

The Hydrangeas spring get-together will be held on Thursday 8th November at Pollen Café, National Botanic Gardens.

For further information, please contact: Robyn Steele, robyn.steele22@gmail.com or Lynne Johnson, lynnejohnson@grapevine.com.au.

Mary Kirk Awarded Life Member of Australian College of Midwives

We are proud to announce that our Director of Nursing and Midwifery/Executive Officer, Mary Kirk, was awarded Life Member of the Australian College of Midwives (LMACM) at the ACM Annual Midwifery Excellence Awards in Melbourne on Friday, 20th July 2018.

The most prestigious award issued by the ACM, it gives special recognition to a midwife who has devoted themselves to the progression of the midwifery profession and the work of the ACM over a sustained length of time.

Congratulations Mary!



QEII Support Staff Receive 2018 Actsmart Business Sustainability Award

A group of young, casual staff from the Support Team at QEII were the recipients of the Motivation Excellence Award at the 2018 Actsmart Business Sustainability Awards in May.

Support Team members Amelia Holly (Producer), Claire Patterson, Sophie Patterson and Alex Smith put together a short film to motivate and educate staff and visitors on the importance of responsible waste management, encouraging them to make conscious decisions when dealing with their waste. They are each currently also studying at University.

"Since its inception, QEII has provided opportunity for students from a variety of backgrounds to boost their income through casual work in Support Staff roles. Their youthfulness and exposure to new ways of thinking are an asset to the organisation. QEII was the proud recipients of the Motivation Excellence Award because of the video prepared by these four wonderful students," said Mary

Kirk, Director of Nursing and Midwifery/Executive Officer at QEII.

Amelia Holly is undertaking a BA in Politics, Philosophy & Economics and a BA in Accounting; Clare Patterson undertaking a BA Environmental Studies; Alex Smith undertaking BA Law and BA International Security; and Sophie Patterson undertaking BA Business Studies.



The Actsmart Business Sustainability Awards showcase the outstanding achievements of organisations participating in the Actsmart Business programs.

With the awards in their ninth year, 2018 saw a record 67 nominations for the 10 awards, ranging from Waste Minimisation to Innovation and Leadership.

Through the Actsmart Business Recycling program, over 50,000 staff are now recycling in their workplaces and diverted the equivalent of 137,000 domestic recycling bins from landfill.



Relaxing into Parenting: looking beyond the birth

Pregnant women have access to a range of antenatal care to support them through pregnancy, and there are a wide variety of classes available to prepare expecting parents for the birth, from hospital provided programs through to private calm birth classes and active birthing workshops. But what about beyond the birth? Preparing expectant parents for the changes in their relationships and lifestyle following the birth of their first child is surely just as important. After all, as Mary Kirk, Executive Director of the Canberra Mothercraft Society (CMS), says "all relationships are up for renegotiation when a baby is born."

New parents are often unprepared for the challenges they will face when it is time to bring baby home. These challenges include bonding and attachment, communication, family expectations, intimacy, sleep, getting to know baby cues, role negotiations, stress and post-natal feelings.

The *Relaxing into Parenting and Baby Makes 3* Program was born out of the need to equip new parents with the knowledge and tools to cope with these challenges.

The program focuses on vital information to ease parents into their new role as parents. The interactive, psycho-educational nature of the group encourages active learning and engagement. Through small and large group discussion, reflective activities, solo and couple based work, viewing educational videos, reading and worksheets, expectant parents can voice and address their fears and learn strategies within a safe and encouraging environment.

Supporting new parents to trust themselves and develop confidence is a key aim of the group.

As participants share with each other, road testing their own ideas and airing their feelings, they realise they are not alone and begin to strengthen their belief in themselves and their partner as parents. They also bond as a group and begin to form new potential friendships with people who are on a similar journey and at the same life stage as they are.

"... we found the group incredibly helpful and have used many of the strategies several times during the later stages of pregnancy and beginning of parenting. We'll definitely be recommending it to our friends whenever they decide to have children." - Max and Sarah

The content is tailored to be delivered to participants in a variety of formations, as required, including couples, single or young parents, and family or community groups that are raising a child together.

Whatever the formation, *Relaxing into Parenting and Baby Makes 3* empowers expectant parents to strengthen their relationships with themselves, their significant other or support people, and with their baby. With this foundation, where attachment and bonding is affirmed and secure, expectant parents feel more able to meet the changing needs of their baby, to reach out for support when needed and to give themselves permission to grow as parents.

Parents are able return after the *Relaxing into Parenting and Baby Makes 3* group to complete workshops for fathers, mothers and couples. These additional workshops offer ongoing support and encouragement to parents who wish to continue their development as individuals, partners, caregivers and providers.

For more information on *Relaxing into Parenting and Baby Makes 3*, please visit our website or contact us on 6205 2333 or info@cmsinc.org.au.

Meet Ruth Bulters RN, RM

Ruth Bulters is a vibrant member of our clinical team. A registered nurse and midwife, she loves working with the families that come through the doors at QEII.

"I'm passionate about working with families of babies and young children and at QEII we do this with great depth. I spend real time with the clients I work with and there is such a wide range of issues and complexities to work through," said Ruth.

Ruth is also thankful for the supportive, health and family focused team at QEII.

"I always feel supported by my colleagues. It is a really positive team environment at QEII and there is a strong focus on health and self-care. It is also the most family friendly place I have ever worked. It is important to me to have a good work-life balance" she said.

Ruth has recently completed her Master of Karitane (Child and Family Health Nursing) with the assistance of a CMS scholarship.



"I feel incredibly lucky to have received a CMS scholarship. I have received such amazing support, not just financially but also study support through my colleagues. Completing this Masters has allowed me to apply new knowledge directly to my work at QEII," said Ruth.

This leads Ruth to another reason that she loves being part of the team at QEII.

"We are such a highly educated team, led by Mary and her passion for women continuing their education. It is great to work for an education focused organisation," she said.

Ruth is a mother of three boys, ages 14, 12 and 10 years, who keep her very busy outside of work. Ruth considers herself an active person. She loves walking her two dogs, her whole family are black belts in Taekwondo, and this year she completed her first Half Marathon, an achievement which took months of training.

The Wharf Review

Join us for a fun night out in late spring! We have a group of 60 seats available for the Sydney Theatre Company's The Wharf Review at the Canberra Theatre.

8pm Friday 2nd November (meeting at 7.30 for pre-show drinks)

Tickets \$65 each (\$60 for under 27 yrs, ID required) - can be purchased from QEII reception via cash, cheque or credit card. Credit card bookings also accepted over the phone, call: 6205 2333.

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