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## **Tamworth Midwifery Services delivers improved model of care**

The Tamworth Midwifery Group Practice will start ramping up again this week, with 20 new expecting mothers accepted into the service.

Susan Heyman, Executive Director Rural and Regional Services, said this had been made possible through the recruitment of nine midwives and five student midwives to Tamworth Midwifery Services, of which the Midwifery Group Practice is a part.

“Tamworth Midwifery Services welcomes three experienced midwives, along with six graduate midwives and five student midwives,” Ms Heyman said.

Graduate midwives are registered midwives who have recently completed a three-year training program and will undertake a 12 month transition to practice program. Student midwives are Registered Nurses studying to become midwives.

Member for Tamworth, Kevin Anderson, commended Local Health District staff and management for working hard to get the program up and running.

“At a time when it’s hard to find qualified Midwives, the Local Health District has managed to put together a solution that will meet our community’s needs,” Mr Anderson said.

“From Tamworth we offer some of the best health services you can find and as a community we can stand together and celebrate that.

“Together with the Local Health District we are always trying to find new ways of delivering the best possible health services to our local community and I thank staff and management for their commitment to that.”

Tamworth Midwifery Services is moving to a new model that will ensure better continuity of care for women, transparency of service and clinically appropriate referrals. All graduate and student midwives will start at Tamworth Hospital, rotating through all services, including the Midwifery Group Practice.

As services are transitioned to the new model, more midwives will rotate through the Midwifery Group Practice, ultimately enabling it to accept more women.

“This model will deliver a group of midwives who are fully trained to care for women across all areas within maternity services, from antenatal to postnatal care,” Ms Heyman said.

“It means that midwives will be more flexible within the Service and women will have the same midwife throughout their pregnancy, even if their needs change.”

The new midwives and students will work closely and be mentored by current staff. They will gain first-hand experience within the Midwifery Group Practice and the rotation through the Service will provide exposure to many different midwifery settings.

Ms Heyman said that safety is a priority with the new model.

“All women entering Tamworth Midwifery Services will be assessed by the Midwife Clinic Coordinator who will determine which birth options are suitable for them, whether it be GP Shared Care, Obstetrician Shared Care or Midwifery Group Practice.

“This will mean greater transparency, fairness in accessing services and an appropriate referral framework for all women.

“I welcome all our new midwives and midwifery students to Tamworth and look forward to seeing them support our local mothers and contribute to the future success of Tamworth Midwifery Services,” Ms Heyman said.