



Media Alert. Monday September 10 2012

## Midwife survey misses point about the importance of mother and baby safety, says Specialist doctors

Australian women are 10 times more likely to have a baby delivered safely and well than women in third world countries who have babies without any medical care. One of the significant factors in achieving this is appropriate obstetric procedures.

The National Association of Specialist Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (NASOG) says women shouldn't be criticised because they choose to have their babies in private hospitals - under the continuous care of the specialist that they choose.

"The most important factor that concerns obstetricians is the safety and health of their patient and their unborn baby," says President of NASOG, Dr Andrew Foote, a practising obstetrician in Canberra.

"We are concerned at the implications of a midwife-led survey of patients that seems to suggest pregnant women who opt for a private hospital birth have an increased risk of being unwittingly tricked into having unnecessary obstetric procedures."

Dr Foote says many mothers-to-be who opt for specialist care do so because they have inherent risks such as being older or with a history of diabetes. He says the survey failed to ask patients why they needed medical intervention.

"Seventy percent of complications during birth may happen suddenly without any warning.

"Are we suggesting that mothers should put their babies and themselves at risk just to appease those who believe women must not take pain relief or have an emergency procedure?" says Dr Foote.

"Do we really want to become a third world health system where 80 out of 1000 babies die due to a lack of medical care compared to 8 out of every 1000 in Australia where medical care is available?"

Dr Foote says appropriate medical intervention can halve a baby's risk of being born unwell and admitted to the nursery. It can halve a mother's risk of vaginal trauma or of life threatening complications such as hemorrhaging.

"Mothers-to-be and their unborn babies deserve the best of obstetric care. The question that the survey misses is what was the outcome for these women and their babies and what would it have been without quality specialist support?" ENDS

### For all Media Inquiries, please contact:

**Dr Andrew Foote. President of NASOG 0417 675 212.** NB: Dr foote is a working obstetrician and may be with patients at the time of your call.

**About NASOG:** The **National Association of Specialist Obstetricians and Gynaecologists** (NASOG) is a not for profit professional association representing specialist obstetricians and gynaecologists, the leading providers of specialist women's health services. Australia is recognised as one of the safest countries in the world to give birth or to be born. **NASOG** strongly endorses our **collaborative, proactive model of obstetric and midwifery care** for all women giving birth in Australia. The safety of this existing model of care is confirmed by research from Australia and around the world. [www.nasog.com.au](http://www.nasog.com.au)