

WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

In Australia, regional and rural towns have limited access to birthing services, meaning families must travel hundreds of kilometres to give birth, especially for women with high-risk pregnancies.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ISSUE:

"...newborn death rates in rural hospitals or clinics without birthing units were about three times higher than those with the units."



Residents of a Queensland town have been concerned roadside births will increase since their maternity service closed.

The closure of maternity and birthing services across Australia has meant women have to travel hundreds of kilometres to give birth. Creating a sustainable service relies on a number of factors, including the availability of midwives and obstetricians, and population sizes. A lack of maternity care in some areas has led to higher numbers of roadside births and newborn deaths.

Even for those who are able to seek treatment locally, around 50% are sent to hospitals closer to the city due to high-risk factors.

2-3 KEY USERS:

Lorna is living in rural Australia and is expecting her first child in 10 weeks and is trying to finalise her birthing plan.

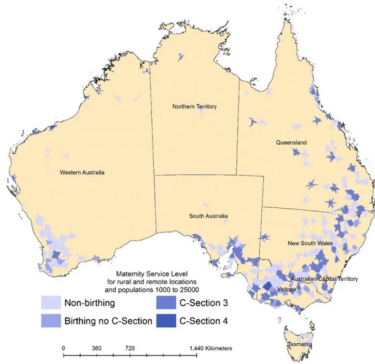
Emma is a midwife working in a rural town where she only sees around 30 births per year.

2-3 POINT OF VIEW STATEMENTS:

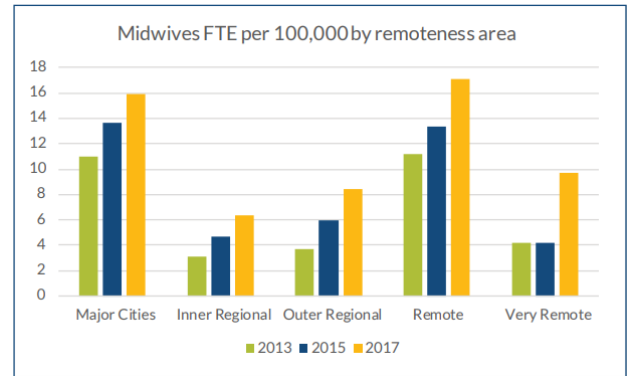
Lorna is worried that she might not be able to travel to the city in time to give birth because of anything unexpected in her pregnancy.

Emma is concerned about keeping her accreditation with so few births in her area each year because many women must be sent to regional or city hospitals to give birth safely.

KEY IMAGES: (2-3 key images with annotation)



Health facilities in rural Australia by type of maternity service.



Midwives FT per 100,000 by region classification

INDUSTRY SECTORS:

- Public and private health sectors
- Infrastructure
- Community organisations
- Transport
- Goods manufacturing
- Government services



The town of Theodore in Queensland rallied to bring back their maternity service in 2018.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

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