Maternal Health Matters Inc. Annual Report 2025

In providing this Annual Report we acknowledge and pay respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia, who are the custodians of the land and of the oldest continuous living culture on Earth. We honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' ongoing connection to sea, waterways, and Country. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

The discussion that surrounds achieving respectful maternity care focuses on the overwhelming dilemma of inequity, ending violence against women, the lack of respect for basic human rights and the poor health outcomes for women and their infants is gaining traction in the wider community. Access to respectful, appropriate, safe, woman centred care during pregnancy, labour, birth and the postpartum are the expectations of our communities, yet often not realised.

This year proved to yet again to be challenging and rewarding.

We have continued to advocate for maternity services that promote the full wellbeing of women. We have met with politicians, health departments and like-minded organisations. There is an increasing awareness that reform is required, and that the wellbeing of mothers is the bellwether for the wellbeing of our community.

We continue to produce a podcast exploring the elements of respectful maternity care and very much appreciate the generosity of those interviewed and Joan Garvan's commitment to facilitating the discussions. We are particularly pleased with the way we are born and the way we give birth matters podcast. Thank you to Kai, Maala for their generous contribution.

Parliamentary friends for Maternal Health. The group was established in June 2023. It is intended that the Group will provide a non-partisan forum for parliamentarians to meet and interact with consumer and non-government organisations on matters relating to maternal health and care during pregnancy and transitioning to mothering and the issues faced by women receiving maternity care, and what the parliament can do address this. The Co-Chairs are Ms Alicia Payne MP, Ms Helen Haines MP, and Mr Llew O'Brien MP. We welcome their support enhancing maternal health and achieving respectful maternity care. We hosted two Parliamentary Friends Forums.
On 15 August 2024, Improving outcomes for First Nations mothers and babies in Australia Professor Helen McLachlan, Aunty Gina Bundle OAM and Ms Kelsey Muhl presented on an innovative program implemented in three major health services in Victoria called 'Baggarrook Yurrongi' that has had substantial impact on the care experience and birth outcomes for First Nations mothers and babies.
On 6 February 2025, The NSW Birth Trauma Report - next steps and policy response. Dr Hazel Keedle, Ms Louise Thornton, and Ms Samantha O'Donovan presented the findings of the NSW Birth Trauma Report highlighting the factors contributing to avoidable birth trauma which the NSW committee believes must be urgently addressed and then explored the next steps and future policy directions required to reduce the incidence of birth trauma.

ABN	3143292475
Address	GPO Box 165 Canberra ACT 2601
Phone	0413225910
Email	info@maternalhealthmatters.org.au
Website	https://www.maternalhealthmatters.org.au/

The ANU Gender Institute and Maternal Health Matters Inc. have collaborated to deliver a Seminar Series - Maternal Health the Hidden Public Health Epidemic, which explores the impact of maternity on women's wellbeing and the transition to parenting, as we know the postnatal period is neglected in current models of care. This year we held a seminar in March 2025 - First Nations Maternal Health. We know standard models of maternity care are not specifically designed to meet the needs of First Nations women and families. Within Australia, links have been made between positive First Nations health outcomes in the presence of cultural safety and in the absence of racism. All First Nations women and birthing people benefit from culturally safe and anti-racist care, and from care in their community, wherever their community may be located. Prof Helen McLachlan and Kelsey Youngblutt, spoke to a model of care for urban first nations women while Karel spoke to birthing with county rather than birthing on country. I would like to acknowledge Joan's work to achieve the seminar series.

In July 2024, we commenced the Maternal Health E-news, to provide our members with a diverse variety of evidenced resources and community news. We intend to provide a monthly newsletter, however as a volunteer-run organisation, sometimes our resources are stretched and therefore we occasionally wrote a bi-monthly newsletter. We intend to publish 10 newsletters a year going forward.

We have continued to refine the Maternal Health Toolbox. We launched a new video; Understanding Respectful Maternity Care that provides the community and health professionals with information required to provide Respectful Maternity Care to everywoman, every time. Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) is an approach to care that emphasizes the fundamental rights of women, newborns, and families, promoting equitable access to evidence-based care while recognizing each woman's unique needs and preferences. We know attitudes and behaviours of health care providers are entrenched in cultural norms, and implicit and explicit bias may cause unintended harm during client interactions. These factors may lead to harmful consequences and place women at greater risk for not receiving appropriate attention to address individual concerns or quality of care, during pregnancy, labour and birth and after the birth.

During the 2025 election campaign we advocated for a National Standard to Deliver Woman-Centred Maternity Care which defines the systems required by health service organisations to monitor the provision of appropriate care, review performance, and make improvements in the care provided. Care will be evaluated during health service accreditation. While accreditation, does not guarantee that no one will experience disrespectful and unsafe maternity care, it ensures safety and quality systems are in place that promote respectful and safe care.

This year we made submissions to public enquires, responded to relevant surveys and participated in meetings including:

- Contributed to the LEAPP Consumer Survey - Postnatal Care Prioritisation Survey, Nov 2024.
- Supported Better Births Illawarra letter to the NSW Treasurer re the budget for implementation of the Birth Trauma Enquiry recommendations, 6th June 2025
- Contributed to the stakeholder consultation on a 'low-risk' definition for professional indemnity insurance

for privately practising midwives.

- Submission to and appearance before the Select Committee on Reproductive, Maternal and Paediatric Health Services in Tasmania Oct 2024
- Contributed to the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care to conduct a national audit of Early Pregnancy Assessment Services (EPAS) clinics across Australia Oct 2025.
- National Maternity Workforce Review Project – contributed to and attended the Stakeholder Open Forum
- Membership of the Australian Midwifery and Maternity Alliance
- Supported Our Boris, Our Way campaign for the Closing the Gap Bill in the ACT.

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We continue to be involved with The World Health Organization workshops and committees, including: Participated International online consultation on the acceptability of a core outcome set for maternal and neonatal health to be used in research and surveillance during emerging and ongoing epidemic threats. This initiative is led by the World Health Organization (WHO).

We welcome The Honourable, the Governor General as our Patron. Her committed to making care, kindness, and respect the focus of her term, resonates with our goal of Respectful Maternity Care for all.

Mary is retiring from the role of treasurer and the board. Mary is a founding member, and her wisdom will be missed. We wish Mary well for her future.

I would like to acknowledge Karel Williams contribution to the Board in her role as First Nations Women's Advisor.

Thank you to Mary, Vanessa O, Vanessa B, and Joan for your commitment to advocacy.

Katie reviewed our policies for currency. Thank you, Katie.

Chami and Katie assisted with the review of the webpage.

I thank the board, Katie, Joan, Bianca, Chami, Vanessa, Mary and Vanessa for their patience and commitment to the ongoing work in the promotion of best practice for maternal health across Australia.

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FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2025

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Board Members Report

The members of the Board of Maternal Health Matters Inc present their report for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.

Directors
The names of the persons who were members of the Board at any time of the year and at the date of this report are as follows:

Ms Ellen O'Keeffe	Ms Vanessa Bakker	Dr Joan Garvan	Ms Mary Kirk AM
Dr Bianca Williams	Ms Katie Petrie	Ms Vaness Owen	Dr Chami Jayasuriya

Principle Activity
Maternal Health Matters is committed to influencing and supporting the delivery of policies and services for the well-being of women seeking maternity care through the adoption of the Respectful Maternity Care Charter. We work with communities, health services and governments to improve maternal health outcomes for all women in Australia.

Significant Changes
No significant changes in the nature of these activities occurred during the year

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the Board and on behalf of the Board



E O'Keeffe
Interim President
Canberra
2 November 2025



Declan O'Keeffe
Treasurer
Canberra
2 November 2024

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Income and Expenditure

General operating– for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

Income	2024 - 2025
Donations	8324.00
GST Refund	376.00
Income	937.10
Total	**9627.10**
Expenditure	
Donation	0
Gratuities	0
Projects	6853.78
Admin	1,324.00
Carried over 23/24 Cheque	511.82
Total	**8689.60**
Profit (Loss)	**$937.50**

Balance Sheet - For the Period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

	Assets	**$**
Current Assets		5308.25
Non Current Assets		0.00
Total Assets		5308.25
	Liabilities	$
Current Liabilities		
Non Current Liabilities		0.00
Total Liabilities		0
Net Assets		5308.25
Equity		5308.25
Opening Balance		4370.75
Net Surplus (deficit) for the period		$937.50
TOTAL Equity		**$5308.25**

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Donors - for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

Joan Garvin
Ellen O'Keeffe
Mary Kirk
Canberra Mothercraft Society

Cash Flow Statement - For the Period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

Cash flows from operating activities		$
Balance carried forward		**$4,370.75**
Income – GST Refund		376.00
Donations		8324.00
Income - Invoices		927.10
Net expenditure from operating activities		(**8689.60**)
Cash at 30 June 2025		**$5308.25**

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Notes to and forming part of the financial statements for the year ending 30 June 2025

Summary of significant accounting polices

The body was formed in 2009 and is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act, 1991, ACT. It is registered on the Australian Business Register. The Australian Business Number is 3143292475. The incorporation is registered for Goods & Services Tax purposes. The incorporation is registered as an income tax exempt charity, as a deductible gift recipient and is registered as a charity with the Australian Charites and Nor-for-profits Commission.

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of Division 60 of the Australian Charites and Nor-for-profits Commission Act 2012. The Board has determined that Maternal Health Matters is a small charity and therefore not a reporting entity.

The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the notes to financial statements and the following Australian Accounting Standards:

- AASB 101, Presentation of Financial Statements
- AASB 108, Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors
- AASB 1048, Interpretation of Standards
- AASB 1054, Australian Additional Disclosures

The financial report has been prepared on a cash basis. The following accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous reporting period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in preparation of this financial report.

- **Income Tax** - The incorporation is registered as an income tax exempt charity with the Australian Taxation Office. Consequently, no provision for taxation has been made in the financial statements.
- **Cash and Cash Equivalents** – includes cash on hand and deposits held at call with financial institutions.
- **Trade and other creditors** – represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the incorporation to the end of the financial year and which are unpaid.
- **Investments** – The incorporation has no investments.

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Audit Report 2024 - 2025

Maternal Health Matters Inc
GPO Box 165
CANBERRA ACT 2601

2 November 2025

AUDIT REPORT

I have audited the Financial Records of Safe Motherhood for All Incorporated for the year ending 30 June 2025.

The Maternal Health Matters Inc. is responsible for the preparation and true and fair presentation of the organisation's Financial Report. This includes the responsibility for the maintenance of adequate accounting records and internal controls that are designed to prevent and detect fraud and error, and for the accounting policies and accounting estimates inherent in the Financial Reports.

I performed procedures to assess whether in all material respects, the Financial Report presents fairly the Financial Position of the organisation as at 30 June 2025, and its Financial Performance for the year ended at that date.

AUDIT OPINION

In my opinion the Financial Report of Maternal Health Matters Incorporated gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the organisation at 30 June 2025, and of its performance for the year ended on that date.

Sincerely,

Original signed

Daniel O'Keeffe BExPhys

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Statement by the Board for the year ended 30 June 2025

Financial Statement for the year ended 30 June 2025

Statement by the Board

In the opinion of the Board the financial report:

Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Maternal Health Matters Inc incorporated at 30 June 2025and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Act 1991

At the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that Maternal Health Matters Incorporated will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is signed for and on behalf of the Board

E O'Keeffe
Interim President

Canberra
7 November 2025

Declan O'Keffe
Treasurer

Canberra
7 November 2025

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