



Media Statement

MEDIA RELEASE

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Celebrating the vital role of midwives across rural, regional and remote Western Australia

Rural Health West is proud to recognise the International Day of the Midwife, celebrated globally on 5 May each year, honouring the essential contribution midwives make to the health and wellbeing of women, babies and families.

This year's observance highlights the critical role midwives play in delivering safe, culturally responsive and continuous care, particularly in rural, regional and remote communities, where access to healthcare can be limited and distances vast.

Across Western Australia, midwives are often at the frontline of maternity care, providing not only clinical expertise but also continuity of care from early pregnancy through to postnatal support, health education, emotional support and cultural understanding.

Geraldton-based midwife Kaitlyn Trindall emphasised the depth of connection built with women and families throughout their pregnancy journey.

“The professional relationships and bonds built between midwives and women and their families in the antenatal period are forged on trust and knowledge,” Kaitlyn said.

“Working with our Indigenous population from all areas of WA and being able to carry out continuity of care from early pregnancy until after the woman has birthed, is incredibly satisfying.”

Megan Chidgey, Acting Operations Manager – Remotes with Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services concurs. “I love the cultural experience that working in the Kimberley brings, and the privilege of supporting women through such a sacred journey in their lives.

“Being welcomed into that space and walking alongside women and their families is something really special.”

Working in rural settings often requires midwives to practice at an extended scope, responding to workforce shortages and the unique needs of their communities, and often across geographically isolated populations. The importance of ongoing professional development is a consistent theme among rural midwives as a result, with many emphasising the need to continually upskill to meet community needs.

“In rural populations, you are required to be more and do more than expected in a larger setting, based on the reduced numbers of staffing and lack of availability of midwives across Australia,” Kaitlyn said.

“I have worked in incredibly remote areas of WA and the more knowledge you can acquire, the more your clients will benefit.”

“Take every opportunity to upskill,” Sarah Dawson, Endorsed Midwife, Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service said.

“My recent training in obstetric ultrasound has had a direct impact on patient care.

“It expanded my scope to offer bedside ultrasound... making care more holistic and accessible for women in our community.”

Rural Health West has played a key role in supporting midwives to expand their clinical capabilities. Through our Health Workforce Scholarship Program (HWSP), scholarships for training have enabled midwives to deliver more comprehensive, timely and accessible care closer to home.

“Thanks to a Rural Health West Health Workforce Scholarship Program grant, I was able to undertake the Obstetric Ultrasound Course which has been incredibly valuable,” Megan said.

“It allows me to assess gestational age on the spot, which helps guide immediate care and appropriate referrals for formal scans, often reducing the need for unnecessary travel to regional hospitals.

“It’s also a powerful engagement tool, helping mothers begin bonding with their baby early in their pregnancy journey. “

Such HWSP-supported ultrasound training has allowed midwives to reduce the need for travel to regional centres, improve early assessment, and strengthen maternal engagement, particularly important in communities where social and logistical barriers can delay care.

“In a rural setting where access to formal radiology can be delayed, it helps support timely decisions and escalation when needed. It’s strengthened my confidence as a rural midwife, and I’d highly recommend it,” Sarah said.

“I am forever grateful to Rural Health West for funding the Obstetric Ultrasound Course for me.”

On International Day of the Midwife, Rural Health West acknowledges the dedication, resilience and expertise of midwives across Western Australia.

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Media notes

International Day of the Midwife is observed on 5 May each year. The date was established by the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) in 1992 to recognise the contributions of midwives globally and to promote the profession as a critical part of maternal and newborn health care.

Rural Health West’s Health Workforce Scholarship Program (HWSP) aims to provide rural health professionals with opportunities to upskill and enhance the services they provide to the community, through professional development grants.

Applications for Round 18 of the Health Workforce Scholarship Program (HWSP) close 24 May 2026. Applications can be submitted online at ruralhealthwest.com.au/programs/health-workforce-scholarship-program/