

Media Release

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Antenatal shared care gave mum peace of mind

As the mother of four Jessica Kew knows only too well how important it is for women to be active participants in their pregnancy and childbirth journey – feeling informed, in control and supported, with their choices heard, respected and honoured throughout.

It's one of the reasons why the Ruse resident is an advocate of the Antenatal Shared Care (ANSC) program which is available across South Western Sydney to women who are likely to have an uncomplicated or low risk pregnancy.

Jessica was pregnant with her second child when one of the midwives at the antenatal clinic mentioned ANSC was an option.

“She asked if I would like to access GP shared care and gave me all the information, so I was able to go through the rest of my pregnancy with my own GP, as she is a provider of ANSC,” Jessica explained.

“From then on, with each of my next three pregnancies, I always asked and made sure I was able to access ANSC with the same GP. It meant I was able to keep seeing the same doctor who knew me and was familiar with my health and pregnancies right from the start.

“Also, I didn't have to attend the hospital as often which made it much more convenient with juggling work, kids, schedules, sicknesses and just life in general. That, in turn, made my pregnancies a little less stressful and I could keep up with what was needed.”

Jessica said ANSC worked well because her GP followed the shared care plan provided by the hospital. The care plan meant her GP appointments could be easily organised and timed around the required visits at the hospital's antenatal clinic.

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This program is supported by funding from the Australian Government through the PHN program.

South Western Sydney PHN is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting general practitioners, practice nurses and other primary health providers to deliver the best possible care for their patients. Our aim is to improve access to quality local healthcare for all residents living in the Bankstown, Fairfield, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Camden, Wollondilly and Wingecarribee LGAs. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, water and skies of South Western Sydney, the Darug, Dharawal and Gundungurra peoples, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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“The antenatal clinic would then just follow up the scan or test results to make sure I had completed the things they needed to keep up to date with my care,” she said.

Jessica said the care she received by choosing ANSC for her last three pregnancies “was completely different” to her first.

“I was able to have a more personal connection with my GP than when attending the antenatal clinic only,” she said. This connection allowed her to communicate her concerns and preferences, and she went on to choose caesarean births for her second, third and fourth baby’s arrival.

“At the clinic, you’re seeing someone new each time, so you always feel like you’re starting the process from scratch. I was able to ask more personal questions because I felt comfortable.

“We had a better understanding each time we went in for my elective caesareans, compared to my first pregnancy when I experienced a tear and post-operation complications due to the unexpected size of my baby. We were able to avoid any of that in the next three births, thanks to the more informative growth scans in the lead up.”

Jessica said she would recommend the ANSC service to anyone who was eligible to access it.

“It was one of the best things I did with my pregnancy healthcare and made it much easier to manage and enjoy alongside my actual pregnancy.”

[Find out more](#)

PIC CAPTION: Jessica Kew with partner George and children (from left) Samuel, 5, Noah, 4, Aiden, 2, and Grace, five months.