

## High birth rates drive demand for physiotherapy

Blacktown has the highest number of babies born in NSW<sup>1</sup>. This causes a high demand for outpatient physiotherapy for treatment of pregnancy-related pain conditions. This led to high waiting times for women, who experienced more pain and physical limitations while awaiting therapy.

## Improving efficiency

We aimed to reduce the average time spent per patient by 40% to 1 hour for pain-related complaints in pregnancy.



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QR code

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<sup>1</sup> NSW Government Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages 2016, 'NSW Top Baby Suburbs and Towns'.

<sup>2</sup> American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (2015) 'Physical activity and exercise during pregnancy and the postpartum period', *Obstetrics and Gynecology*, vol. 126, pp. 135-142.



Amelia Poon

"It was really such a helpful class and I enjoyed it so much, especially all the activities and exercises".

## Keeping women active

Reducing progression of pain is essential in keeping women active during pregnancy. Physical activity has been proven to have a wide range of health benefits in the antenatal period<sup>2</sup>. Working closely with midwifery staff has allowed more patients to be referred earlier in their pregnancy before pain becomes severe.

## Empowering women in pregnancy

A clinician-driven service redesign was performed to shift treatment from a one-on-one setting to group-based education and exercise classes. The class empowers women with self-management and prevention strategies to reduce progression of pain during pregnancy. Patients are also given the option of one-on-one follow-up if required.

## Our program

Our program is focused on pelvic and low back pain at any stage in pregnancy. It includes:

- Common causes of pain
- Activity modifications
- Treatment options
- Exercises
- Impact on birth
- Recovery after birth

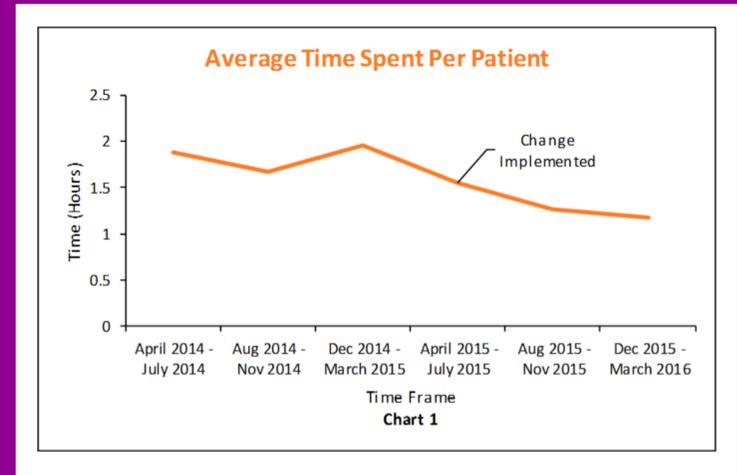
## Better patient outcomes

Statistical analysis of clinician time found:

- Reduced average therapist time spent per patient by up to 40% (Graph 1).
- Reduced time wastage from non-attendance.

Through patient satisfaction surveys:

- **100% of patients happy with the quality of physiotherapy received.**



## Next steps.. Groups in

- Physiotherapy in pregnancy and birth
- Abdominal muscle separation
- Pelvic floor/incontinence
- Perineal trauma



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