

10th September 2017

Friends of Belmont Birthing meeting – “Belmont Birthing matters”

Presenter: Anne Turner

Focus of meeting: to inform supporters of the current situation at Belmont; to gather more volunteers to support the service moving forward

Item 1: Belmont today

HNEH recently revised their home birth policy for Belmont, this includes a more clearly defined list of suburbs. All are now within 30 mins of Belmont. This policy has been consulted with the midwives and consumers, in the form of invited feedback.

Staffing is stretched thin at the moment.

Asbestos has been removed and Belmont is back in action. It needs redecorating, there is some (but not enough) funding available for this.

Item 2: Belmont tomorrow

- Need a systemic survey of birth consumers – consumers should be contributing to the development of this
- Need ideas to reach GPs, to ensure they refer suitable women to BMGP. The key selling point is that Belmont is the only place offering continuity of care outside of the Birth Centre team at JHH.
- Need to nurture the midwives, we are grateful consumers and they deserve it. This could include fundraising to improve the space at Belmont and add resources. Morning teas are also a nice way to say thank you

FoBB's 3 main growth areas:

1. Fundraiser Events
2. Policy & Projects – consumer advocacy. HNE need to offer a service that is desired and in demand.
3. Promoting Belmont – through markets, open days, flyers, GPs

Item 3: Input from the attendees

- Michelle has booked a stall at Valentine Markets, Nov 4, needs volunteers to run it
- Bronwyn asked for specific targets. Maria informed the group a full time midwife should have 35 women per year. BMGP currently have 6 midwives, and she wants to employ 12 total. Maria needs to demonstrate consumer demand to employ more midwives. Whilst demand is low a Belmont client cannot keep their Belmont midwife if transferred to JHH. Currently the midwifery team model at JHH has a waiting list. Lots of these women would be suitable to birth with Belmont, but they are not making that choice. Do these consumers just need reassurance?
- Male audience member in the middle: GPs don't listen to consumers. Can we get something published by University of Newcastle based on statistics that doctors will listen to? Dorothy's answer: there are 35 papers already available, some using Belmont's own statistics. The research is out there. Suggestions from various attendees to collate this research and present in a summary fact sheet form that outlines Belmont's safe and positive outcomes for

women. Suggestion from Kate Kennedy to include a statement of support from Dr Andrew Bisets and possibly Dr Andy Woods

- Consumers may be deterred because they can't convince their husbands that Belmont is safe. Resources for convincing men would be handy ... Blokes of Belmont [Does Daniel Evans still run that kind of thing?]
- There is a culture that if you have private health insurance then you should use it, that that model of care is superior. GPs may not even bother mentioning other models of care.
- Can we survey the GPs and find out what they're thinking? Because they most likely already know the facts, but they still aren't referring.
- Valerie and others expressed concerns that GPs are not the key – that women need to be reached before they even see their GPs for early pregnancy assessments and referrals. Women need to hear about Belmont and feel confident enough to trust such a model of care – social media was discussed as a potentially powerful tool to reach a wide range of women. Should we have a Twitter or Instagram account, but it would rely on midwives sharing birth announcements to be of any interest?
- Renee suggested it would be great to find a film producer who could write/edit/produce an ad for Belmont. Something that we can have on YouTube, and potentially pay to advertise (Sia and Adrian were in attendance today – Renee to approach them with the idea)
- Dr Bronwyn works at Newcastle University and suggested she may be able to encourage someone to write a paper regarding birth research on the group practice model of midwifery care.
- Tegan and Laura offered to assist with getting printed materials/graphic design organised.
- Discussion to purchase a standing banner from Officeworks before the November markets. Also need to update and print fob postcards/flyers. Kim will organise to print more copies of the BMGP postcards she put together, and possibly more purple balloons, depending on budget.
- Stevie wrote in to fobb during the week to suggest an excellent fundraising idea: families are invited to purchase a star plaque for \$50 engraved with their child's name and DOB. These stars are then displayed permanently on the Birth Centre's walls in year groups. This was a fundraiser seen at Royal Randwick. We need to consult with Belmont management and midwives and, with their consent, go ahead and start organising this great idea, with a volunteer to coordinate it.
- Jenny asked Renee to fix the facebook page because she has clients who say they can't post to it. Renee has checked and this is not the case. Anyone can post as a visitor. FoBB administrators will monitor more closely and add suitable posts to the main wall as needed



Item 4: action items

- Need volunteers for Valentine school markets (Michelle coordinating)
- Need balloons for markets (Kim/Maria?)
- Need flyers for markets (Anne & Tegan)

- Natalie is running a film night with stalls, FoBB welcome to have a stall, it's on November 11. Need volunteers to be on our stall. Also, midwives or a fobb representative invited to speak for 2-3 minutes. Discuss possibility with Maria.
- Discuss various fundraising ideas with Maria and decide priorities (Anne)
- Renee to liase with social media volunteers
- Anne to set date for next FOBB meeting with all volunteers who indicated they want an "active" or "lead" involvement. **Could those volunteers indicate a preference for time and days** (eg weekday evening/weekend day/weekday day) by reply email or fill out the poll here: <https://doodle.com/poll/dqcf222u5cufm3qq>
- Anne to liase with student midwives who offered to run birth centre tours – all meet with Maria to get established
- Any attendee who feels something is incorrect or has been omitted from these minutes, please reply to make note of required revision