



Backgrounder

History

The Australian and New Zealand Stillbirth Alliance (ANZSA), a regional office of the International Stillbirth Alliance was established in 2008 as a not for profit organisation. ANZSA is an alliance of organisations and individuals sharing common goals – to reduce the stillbirth rate and improve bereavement care in Australasia through the conduct of high quality collaborative research, development and promotion of best practice in maternity care, and education and public awareness initiatives in the ANZ setting. ANZSA functions through a Board and three committees: Clinical Practice and Education, Research, and Public Awareness and Health Promotion.

ANZSA's founding member organisations are: Australian College of Midwives, Bonnie Babes Foundation, Mater Health Services Brisbane, SIDS and Kids National, Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand (PSANZ), Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG), SANDS Australia, SANZS New Zealand, Stillbirth Foundation Australia.

The Teddy Love Club, Bears of Hope and National Twin Loss Support are also member organisations. ANZSA collaborates with 11 ANZ hospitals:

<http://intranet.mater.org.au/webdoc/ccs/Internet/ANZSA/website/membership.htm>

Regional networks have been established through ANZSA regional coordinators in each state and territory (<http://www.stillbirthalliance.org.au/coordinator.htm>). ANZSA partners with the National Perinatal Statistics Unit and the Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand's Perinatal (PSANZ) Mortality Group.

Since its inception ANZSA has achieved a number of significant milestones, including:

- Creating effective working relationships with member organisations, hospital members, and individual supporters
- Improving clinical practice through the implementation of the PSANZ Clinical Practice Guidelines for Perinatal Mortality Audit via an education program and e-Learning tool
- Improving national data on stillbirths through national consensus on data collection for clinical audit of perinatal deaths
- Conducting high quality research including identifying important risk factors for stillbirth and improving autopsy communication and consent
- Raising public awareness through a quarterly newsletter, position statements, and website materials

Mission

To help families throughout Australasia, both now and in the future, by reducing the risk of stillbirth and ensuring appropriate care for parents whose baby is stillborn.

Goals

- To promote collaboration between organisations and individuals including parents and communities, bereavement carers, health care professionals, researchers and policy makers which aims to prevent stillbirth, improve clinical practice, improve care for affected families and raise public awareness
- To enhance local capacity in a bid to address the issues associated with stillbirth focusing on Australasia and those populations with greatest need
- To maintain and disseminate high quality evidence based information on stillbirth for parents, bereavement carers, researchers, health care professionals and policy makers
- To develop and disseminate best practice recommendations and facilitate high quality research and audit which addresses stillbirth priority areas for the differing needs across Australasia
- To enhance the delivery of appropriate care for parents through connecting parents with existing support services, supporting the establishment of adequate maternity services, and facilitating educational opportunities for carers

Guiding Principles

ANZSA is guided by the belief that collaboration and capacity building facilitate understanding and prevention of stillbirth and the delivery of optimal preventive and bereavement care.

Who We Are:

ANZSA Chair: Professor David Ellwood

Deputy Chair: Dr Adrian Charles

Secretary: Associate Professor Vicki Flenady

Research Committee Chair: Professor Yee Khong

Clinical Practice and Education Committee Chair: Associate Professor Vicki Flenady

Public Awareness and Health Promotion Committee Chair: Ms Ros Richardson

Parent Advisory Committee Chair: TBA

ANZSA Secretariat: Miss Madeleine Elder, Associate Professor Vicki Flenady Miss Laura Koopmans, Mr Yanlin Liu and Miss Dominique Rossouw,

For board member bios please visit

<http://intranet.mater.org.au/webdoc/ccs/Internet/ANZSA/website/about3.htm>

Stillbirth Facts

- Globally, over 3 million babies are stillborn every year with the vast majority occurring in developing countries
- Over 2,000 babies are stillborn in Australia and New Zealand every year occurring at a rate of approximately 7 out of every 1000 births; approximately 6 babies each day
- While infant mortality rates have declined in Australia over the past two decades there has been no reduction in the rate of stillbirth
- Stillbirths account for 70% of perinatal deaths
- Stillbirth rates for Indigenous women are over twice that of non-Indigenous women
- Major risk factors for stillbirth (many of which are modifiable) are: overweight and obesity, advanced maternal age (over 35), maternal smoking, and primiparity. Prolonged pregnancy is also a modifiable risk factor for antepartum stillbirth.

Australian and New Zealand Stillbirth Alliance
Level 2, Quarters Building
Annerley Rd
Woolloongabba
QLD 4101
(07) 3163 3829
(07) 3163 1588
info@stillbirthalliance.org.au

- The presence of fetal growth restriction in approximately 40-50% of unexplained stillbirth is an important consideration for future prevention strategies.
- Up to one third of stillbirths are unexplained
- It is estimated that unexplained stillbirth is now 10 times that of SIDS - there are 500 unexplained stillbirths each year compared to 50 SIDS deaths.
- The high proportion of unexplained stillbirth is a major barrier to further reduction in the rates of stillbirth. The lack of diagnosis leaves little clues for parents and care providers struggling with decisions about future pregnancies.

For more facts about stillbirth please see:

<http://intranet.mater.org.au/webdoc/ccs/Internet/ANZSA/website/fact.htm> and

<http://intranet.mater.org.au/webdoc/ccs/Internet/ANZSA/website/research5.htm>