

# T F

Torie Finnane Foundation  
*for women & babies*

A report showcasing activity  
since inception and the plan  
for 2024

December 2023



# Thank you from the TFF team

Three years ago, the Torie Finnane Foundation didn't exist. We were only beginning to grasp what life without Torie would be like. And we certainly didn't know that, with incredible strength, power, giving and kindness, we could begin setting the scene to be a key enabler for midwives and special care nursery staff around NSW to feel greater strength in how they work.

Since we started this Foundation, over 65 different professional development opportunities have been supported across 13 locations in the three largest regional local health districts – Hunter New England, Murrumbidgee and Western New South Wales. The detail is outlined on the next page.

An incredible amount of community support has reminded us that we're certainly not alone in remembering Torie and that coming together in support of midwives, quite literally, allows us to keep adding to our families and expanding our hearts.

**An enormous thank you** to everyone who has given time, love, funds and effort to this organisation. We've raised over \$1,000,000 to date, which enables us to provide longevity in our support, develop strong strategic partnerships and continue building to be considered a key enabler to uplift midwives.

As you would know, our initial intention was to have regionally-based midwives take part in long-term placements at metropolitan hospitals. One key learning since inception is that this activity, whilst very wanted and appreciated, is logistically very difficult and varied. It's based heavily on the applicant's capacity to work away from home and how the local hospital can find 'cover' for the applicant's position in this period.

This will always remain an activity for the Foundation however, we have also started providing more practical support to our midwives that allow them to stay locally and still feel like they are developing professionally. We also want to enable more midwives to bring a greater level of support to local mothers and babies more quickly.

Already for 2024, we know we will provide at least 200 professional development opportunities to midwives and special care nursery staff across 21+ locations and conversations are continuing about what equipment and further support can be provided throughout next year.

We believe that we're only just scratching the surface of what's possible for us.

We hope you have a wonderful end to 2023 and we look forward to reconnecting in 2024.

With great gratitude,

Liam & Geoff

(Co-Chairs Torie Finnane Foundation)



R-L: Torie's family - Bill & Sue O'Hare, Geoff O'Hare, Gen O'Hare, Liam Finnane, Caddie O'Hare, Graeme Gibson

# What TFF has enabled



As we noted above, we have already managed to support midwives and special care nursery staff across three Local Health Districts through **65+ scholarships** and we know we can do so much more in the years, partnerships and activities to come. Specifically we have:

- **Provided two fully funded placements, and more in the pipeline! (approx \$20,000 each)**
  - Both placements (1 in 2022 and another in 2023) included midwives from Orange Health Service undertaking 2-4 week placements at the Royal Hospital for Women in Randwick, NSW where they worked in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, a tertiary, level 6 NICU. In comparison, the Special Care Nursery in Orange, NSW is level 3. Read more about Hayley Easter, who completed her placement in October 2023, on the next pages.
  - Hunter New England (HNE), Murrumbidgee and Western NSW Local Health Districts are keen to continue working with us to offer midwives this opportunity to train at metropolitan hospitals. Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Camperdown, are ready to accept applicants in 2024 from Western NSW and we will look to deepen engagement with John Hunter Hospital (for HNE midwives) and Centenary Hospital in Canberra (for Murrumbidgee midwives).
- **Provided 30 fully funded scholarships to upskill midwives in basic and advanced level maternity safety (funded \$51,000 not including travel for midwives)**
  - 5 x midwives from each of the three Local Health Districts took part in a 2 day Preparation in Maternity Safety (PIMS) course delivered in Sydney. The course covers the basic knowledge and skills needed to provide quality maternity care. More midwives with this basic training will enable a greater level of consistent care to more expectant mothers in regional areas and lessen the reliance/burden on a small group of more experienced midwives.
  - 5 x midwives from each of the three Local Health Districts took part in 2 day Advancing in Maternity Safety (AIMS) course delivered in Sydney. This enables a greater understanding of the complexities of childbearing and how to care for women experiencing challenges. More midwives with this knowledge will ultimately improve outcomes for women and babies across the region and lessen the reliance/burden on a small group of experienced midwives.
- **Provided necessary training equipment for midwives and special care nursery to feel more prepared when its required of them to step up (funded \$30,000)**
  - The Foundation funded maternity equipment for Western NSW LHD which included four Juno Devices to practice newborn resuscitation, four Pracibabies which assist in practicing and measuring compressions on newborns and three 'Premature Anne's' which allows training in Umbilical Vein Catheterisation for both medical and midwifery nursing staff.

Locations in regional NSW where TFF has supported midwives throughout 2022 & 2023



# What TFF has enabled (continued)



- **Provided the opportunity for midwives and special care nursery staff to deepen their knowledge/skills, connect with others experiencing similar situations as well as a chance to feel supported and recognised in their roles. (funded \$35,000)**
  - **17** x midwives and special care nursery staff attended the national NeoPaed Confernece in Sydney in September 2023. Some of the topics included: Stillbirth prevention, Antenatal steriods, Neonatal resuscitation, Management and chronic lung disease and home oxygen, abnormal head shapes, introduction of feeding protocol, compassion in health care. (7 x Western NSW & 10 x Murrumbidgee LHDs)
  - **12** x midwives and special care nursery staff attended the Sutherland Hospital Maternity & Breastfeeding Conference in Sydney in September 2023. Some topics included: supporting new mothers, lactation in first 72 hours, feeding strategies. (7 x Western NSW & 5 HNE LHD)
  - **4** x midwives and special care nursery staff attended the Babies in the Bush conference in Broken Hill in October 2023 facilitate by the Australian College of Neonatal Nurses. Some topics included: Life Support simulations, Normothermia, respiratory support, jaundice physiology, preventing hypoglycaemia, neonatal infections. (4 x Western NSW LHD).

## Hear from the frontline

The Foundation has been told by Local Health Districts that there is an uplift needed in knowledge to recognise and care for women experiencing emergencies and unexpected situations during pregnancy, labour, birth and the postnatal period. One solution to begin closing this knowledge gap is the 2-day Advancing in Maternity Safety (AIMS) course delivered in Sydney. Completing this course will enable a greater understanding of the complexities of childbearing and how to care for women experiencing challenges.

**More midwives with this knowledge will ultimately improve outcomes for women and babies and lessen the reliance/burden on a small group of more experienced midwives.**

Hear some feedback about how midwives found their course experience this year:

*"I gained so much knowledge over the two days, particularly skills in managing obstetric emergencies which we rarely experience in our small, rural hospital.....I was also able to network with other midwives and doctors from around Australia which was a great opportunity! I am eager to bring my new knowledge back to my colleagues and use what I have learnt to help improve our unit."*

Charlotte, Registered Midwife, Mudgee Hospital

*"This course has really impacted my confidence at work in a positive light and my first shift back I was already running scenarios with junior colleagues. I cannot thank the Torie Finnane Foundation enough for this opportunity.....It has greatly helped with my confidence knowing that I am equipped to deal with emergency situations before our obstetric or paediatric team arrives."*

Jessica, Registered Midwife, Bathurst Health Service

*"This course has helped cement maternal emergency skills by learning about the foundation on which these procedures are based.....This course has helped my confidence two-fold not only with maternal emergencies but with further study."*

Mel, Registered Midwife WNSW LHD



# Hear from the frontline (continued)

The Foundation has also heard that there is uplift needed in knowledge to understand when and how to effectively resuscitate a newborn. One successful way of delivering this training was through the Babies in the Bush conference delivered in Broken Hill by the Australian College of Neonatal Nurses (ACNN) in October 2023.

Local Health Districts have requested this conference and ongoing knowledge sharing so TFF is in discussions to formally partner with the ACNN to deliver this same conference and content to two more sites across regional NSW in 2024.

**More midwives and nurses with this knowledge will see greater outcomes of survival for newborns delivered with difficulties in regional areas and lessen the reliance/burden on a small group of more experienced clinicians.**

Hear some feedback about how midwives found their conference experience this year:

*"It was a truly enlightening and inspiring experience. The knowledge and insights I gained during the event will undoubtedly impact my work in a profound way....This conference has not only enriched my understanding but also renewed my passion for neonatal care."*  
 Isabella, Registered Midwife, Dubbo Base Hospital

*"I would like to thank you for providing me with a scholarship to attend the Babies is the Bush conference in Broken Hill. As a student midwife, neonatal resus was something I found very scary and overwhelming but being exposed to some very practical and informative training has definitely given me more confidence to feel useful in the event of a resus. I also met some wonderful people and made some great professional connections which I know will positively impact my practise and experience as a midwife in the future."*  
 Manolia, Registered Nurse, WNSW LHD



Check out some the Bathurst Health Service utilising the Juno Devices to practice newborn resuscitation, the Pracibabies to practice measuring compressions on newborns and 'Premature Anne's' which allows them to practice their Umbilical Vein Catheterisation skills.

# Our Plan for 2024



Next year will see us reaching more midwives and special care nursery staff across more locations as we commit to providing \$105,000 each to Hunter New England, Murrumbidgee and Western NSW Local Health Districts.

We already know we will support at least 200 professional development opportunities and we are continuing to define more areas of support that will increase these numbers and, ultimately provide greater support to regionally based women and babies.

One key intention of these opportunities is to have as many as possible delivered locally, to allow more staff to attend and importantly, to ensure our regional services don't have further staffing shortages when team members have to spend more time away to travel.

Some of the activities TFF will support include:

- Third-trimester ultrasound training - this allows better detection of growth problems and ensures better outcomes for babies. Midwives with additional ultrasound skills will enable more women to be supported and detect further support needed in the final stages of pregnancy.
- Advanced level maternity care training - this will enable a greater understanding of the complexities of childbearing and how to care for women experiencing challenges.
- Neonatal resuscitation and stabilisation training - more midwives and nurses with this knowledge will see greater outcomes of survival for newborns delivered with difficulties in regional areas. The earlier resuscitation and stabilisation happen, the greater the opportunity for survival and success in the entire recovery process.
- Basic obstetric lacerations training - this will increase the ability to diagnose, anaesthetise and repair birth lacerations as well as provide safe surgery practices to provide more consistent care to women in the birthing process and postnatal recovery.
- Breastfeeding and lactation support - there is increasing evidence that first-time mothers feel less anxiety and a stronger connection with their baby if there is a supportive breastfeeding and lactation plan in place, particularly in the first 72 hours post-birth. More midwives offering consistent communication and support will enable stronger mothers and babies.
- Wellbeing activities - through a range of conferences (ie. annual Australian College of Midwives) and training (ie. dealing with trauma) we hope to provide opportunities for connection, recognition and support.

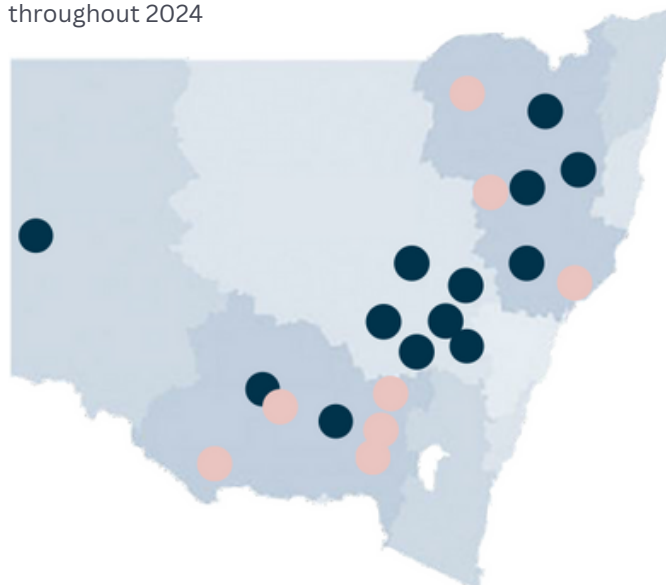
Throughout the year, we also plan on defining how TFF can support midwives and special care nursery staff in Southern NSW Local Health District, where Torie's family are from.

Behind all of this, we will also be focusing on ensuring our efficiency and investing in knowing our impact more deeply.

Our fundraising will remain a priority. Hopefully, we can reach our 2024 target of \$500,000 to enable us to make long-term commitments to provide greater sustainability and uplift to our midwives and special care nursery staff.

**We know we are contributing to stronger women and babies.**

Locations in regional NSW where TFF has committed to support midwives throughout 2024



# Events for 2024

## January 13 - Top of Oz

Come join us or support the team (most of them are kids under 10!) to climb Mt Kosciuszko as we remember Torie and consider what more we can do to support our invaluable midwives and special care nursery staff. Details on the [TFF website](#).

## March 23 - Torie Finnane Foundation Ball

Come join us for our third Gala Ball to be held in Orange. It has been a truly special night each year and we look forward to creating more fantastic memories. Look out on our socials for ticket information.

### Community Events:

#### Wagga Wagga Takes Two

An annual event which pairs local celebrities with accomplished singers as duets, to raise money for local charities around Wagga Wagga. Local celeb Nick McCarthy has selected TFF as his chosen charity (thanks Nick!) so there will be two key events he's keen to get TFF network involved in:

- 1) Fundraising Golf Day - Friday 9 February
- 2) Pink Tie Ball - Saturday 10 February

Watch out for the Wagga Wagga Takes 2 performance events scheduled for 18,19,20 April.

**Let's come together to support Nick McCarthy in his quest for singing stardom. Details to be involved or to donate are on the TFF Website.**

**If you're keen to host an event throughout the year, please be in touch and we will provide any support that we can. We'd love to highlight it on our website and socials as well.**

### Orange Hospital Ball 2023

My name is Emma Curtin, I am a Registered Nurse and Clinical Nurse Specialist working in the Orange Emergency Department. Samantha Conte is my beautiful friend and colleague, also a Registered Nurse who has recently started her year training as a Student Midwife.

Over a year ago we had this grand idea of restarting the Orange Hospital Ball (we haven't had one in over 5 years). For two women who have never been to a ball, let alone organise one, we are so proud of ourselves for pulling off such a fantastic night for our colleagues.

The charity is close to many of us at the hospital and wider community, so it was an honour to hold the Orange Hospital Ball with the TFF at its core.

The night was a huge success, we **raised \$6000** and have even had further donations come through since the event.



Emma and Samantha right before doors opened to their great event! Thank you!



THANK  
YOU