

**Submission
No 5**

SUPPORT FOR NEW PARENTS AND BABIES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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The Lane Cove Early Childhood Health Service (LCECHS) is the most important service to new parents. I will never forget how much Jenny, Bronwyn and the other nurses did for my family at one of the most difficult times for us, the first 12 months of my son's life. I appreciate it more than words can say.

The LCECHS visited my home 9 days into my son's birth and not only provided life saving and practical new parent information, through their expertise immediately recognised signs that things were not right with my son and made a referral to Tresillian. Within 19 days from when my son was born I had visited Tresillian and again they recognised that we needed specific support. For the next 12 months LCECHS in combination with Tresillian, and local doctors and specialists, enabled me to be the best mum I could be and help support my son through some significant health issues (ENT related).

My ask to parliament is to continue to invest in LCECHS, Tresillian and also Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA) who provided invaluable support, guidance & life changing information provided by highly qualified nurses who are working hand in hand with new parents and their babies. Like Jenny, Bronwyn from LCECHS, nurses who answered all my calls via ABA helpline and Kerrie Patten from Tresillian, nurses at Tresillian Wollstonecraft Day stay (Liz Hand & Gina) & all the amazing nurses at Tresillian Willoubgy Residential in unit A.

The impact LCECHS, Tresillian and ABA had is:

1. Allowed me to find ways to enjoy motherhood and build a relationship with my son
2. Provided me with tools for life allow me to be a better mother, wife, daughter and friend.
3. Introduced me to an incredible support network in my local community that will allow me to be confident in my son's upbringing and development.
4. Provided a safe and kind environment to help provide education and practical parenting tips by qualified nurses

I can't imagine going through the first 12 months without this support.

I would like to provide some positive areas that both LCECHS and Tresillian could improve:

1. Leverage secure and advanced cloud technologies to allow these types of services scale across the wider population eg apps with parenting information, virtual communication via virtual chatbots which can answer basic information that can then escalate to a nurse which would allow nurses to work on the most urgent or sensitive new parent situation and leverage the skills for these scenarios and chatbots answer basic new parent questions. There are many examples of these types of services being used in other industries and the health industry a technology company like Microsoft could share these examples and the benefits and returns.
2. Make available these services 24/7 leveraging advanced cloud technologies eg chatbots and basic information via apps, Tresillian has made a good attempt with these however by approaching technology companies who can share ways to provide secure ways to tailor information using artificial intelligence for the new mums to again allow nurses focus their time on high value engagements with new mums eg provide community classes like Circle of Security (brilliant new

parent course) or PND help groups. This could help from a cost saving perspective and ensuring greater satisfaction from the services.

3. Leverage advanced cloud technologies to help manage resourcing. For example LCECHS is opened for limited times and appointments are made on the day via whiteboard and done first best comes service. Instead of nurses waiting to services new parents , nurses could services based on expected volume of visitors to the centres which could be tracked and automated via secure online booking service which most doctors use today (eg via Medical Director or Clinic to Cloud). Another example is with Tresillian - you are required to make a booking by calling on a specific day and time. In both situations by using advanced technologies this would help scale the service and also ensure resourcing is optimised. I am sure the current booking service approaches are not allowing LCECHS and Tresillian nurses to work at their optimal.

4. ABA have a great approach where their hot line is available 24/7 and qualified nurses pick up calls at home this provides great services and support for new mums. I would encourage this type of scaled approach across all the new parent services. The reason for this is new parent questions often come up out of office hours (eg 2am) and would also enable nurses to have a great work life balance by working from home. In addition to this there would be significant cost savings I am sure with this!

5. The blue book is a great central location of your babies health history - there are two immediate areas of improvement for this:

a. Make this electronic so if a new parent forgets to bring it to record the services it is available via a secure app.

b. Connect the blue book electronically to all new parent and babies database systems so that there is a SINGLE view of the new parent and baby across all health services, LCECHS, Tresillian and ABA etc.

I would encourage the government to support LCECHS, Tresillian and ABA to explore how other countries (UK, Canada) and the commercial industry use advanced secure cloud technologies to engage with their customers to help accelerate and scale the reach of the highly valuable resources and expertise.

LCECHS, Tresillian and AHA are such invaluable resources and I'm sure have helped many many other new parents, all suggestions above are to support the scaling these amazing resources across ALL new parents and babies.