

**BIRTH FOR
HUMANKIND**

ANNUAL REPORT

FY18-19



We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we work and provide services and pay our respects to their elders, past, present and those yet to come. We also acknowledge the courage and resilience of Aboriginal women who have birthed on these lands for thousands of years.

Clients' names have been changed throughout the report to honour their privacy.

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Illustration and design by @suecroke_

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OUTGOING CHAIR'S REPORT

Whilst this annual report reflects back on last year, my sights are set firmly on the future. A future in which the start-up, purpose-driven organisation I had the privilege of co-founding, is an established, complementary presence in the maternity services sector.

Which is why it is with mixed feelings that I write my last report as Chair. I step down from the board as of 30th July 2019 to prepare for the arrival of my second child.

From humble beginnings in 2014 as a small collective of volunteers, I have witnessed the tremendous growth and establishment of Birth for Humankind as a respected professional service. Many of our current highlights and milestones are shared in this report.

Our immediate focus remains on securing a sustainable future for the organisation, based on collaboration and reaching those mothers and families who need our services the most. I am proud of what we have achieved this last year in cementing firm foundations that will help the organisation thrive long into the future.

I have full confidence in the solid vision of the board to advance our mission of providing complementary non-clinical support services that improve mothers and babies experiences of birth and early parenting, whilst advocating for a more equitable, respectful maternal health system.

It has been a privilege to work alongside the passionate team of directors, staff and volunteers, and I look forward to remaining an active ambassador for Birth for Humankind.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Flannery'.

Kirstan Flannery
Chair



CEO & CHAIR'S REPORT

Much like in the lives of the many babies we have seen arrive in the past 12 months, seemingly small developments have a huge impact.

On the surface we remain the same.

We remain driven by a common purpose of bridging the gap in maternity service accessibility for birthing parents who are experiencing disadvantage.

Yet we have advanced our operations considerably, to help ensure our sustainability and improve our efficiency.

We have invested in the systems and processes that are needed to sustain a dynamic and growing organisation. The policies, reporting procedures and database management systems we have implemented enable us to uphold best practice standards and ensure the safety and security of our volunteers and clients.

We have consolidated learning and evidence from research and program reviews, to improve our work so that we can achieve better outcomes for women and birthing people.

We have introduced ambitious new ways of working and tested new ideas, to ensure we can best provide continuity of support to clients and influence the maternal health system to do the same.

We have welcomed new board directors and seen longstanding directors move on to new chapters. We are so grateful for their continued support and the lasting contribution they have made.

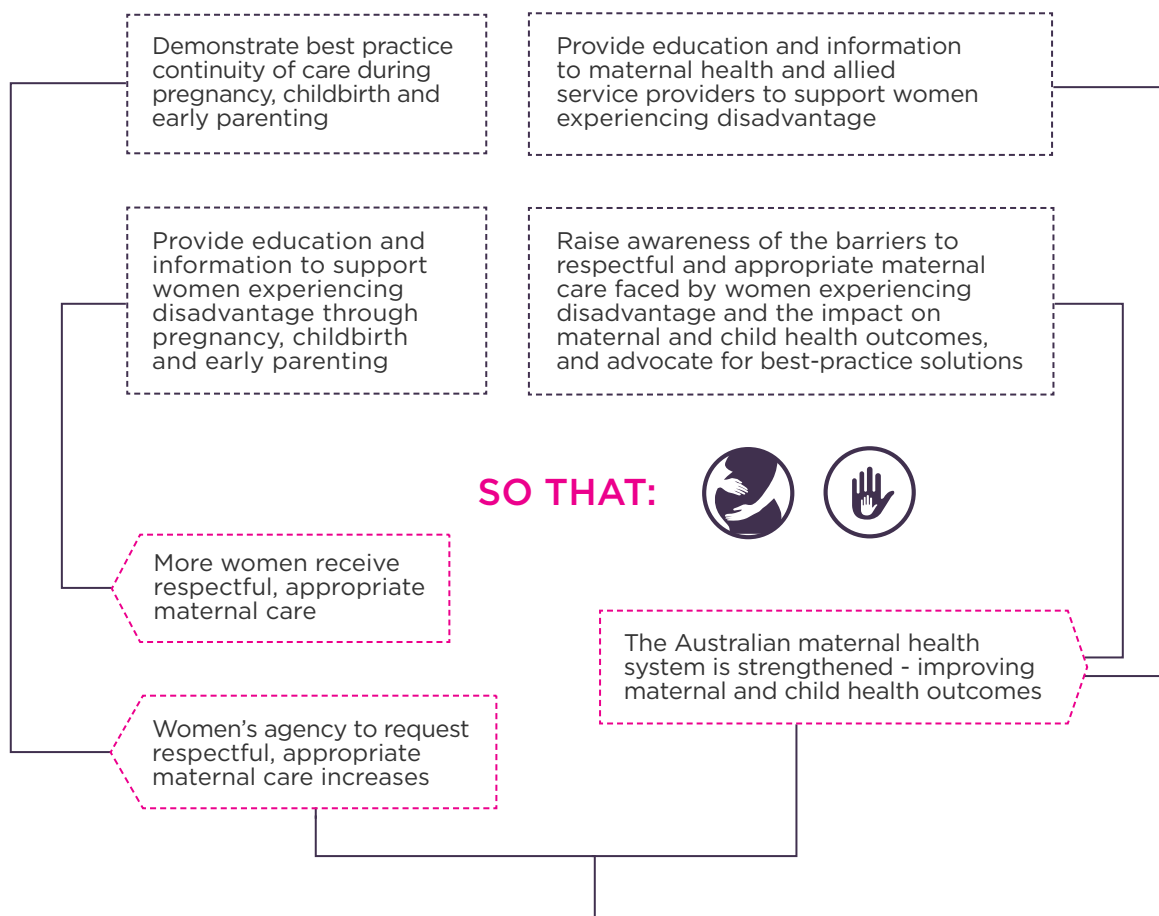
What we have achieved and all we continue to aspire to would not be possible without the determination of our staff team and the generosity of our volunteers. We look forward to all we will continue to achieve together in the year ahead.

Joanne Kirk
Chair
(commenced July 2019)

Ruth Dearnley
Chief Executive Officer

WHAT WE DO

THROUGH OUR PROGRAMS WE:



OUR VISION

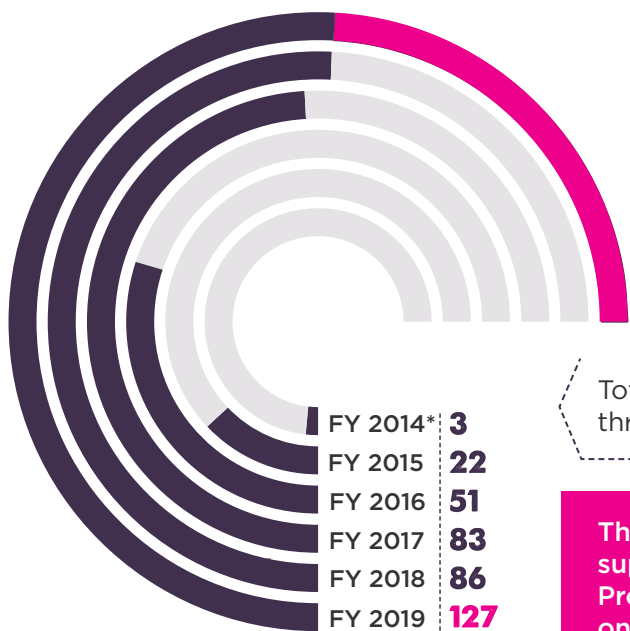
Every mother has the care and support she needs to make empowered choices and to have the best birth and early parenting experience possible for herself, her baby and growing family.



OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

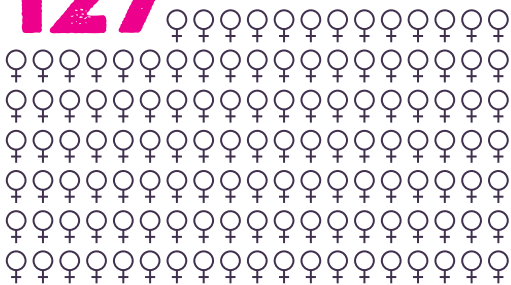


This year we saw a **48%** increase in the number of women supported through our Doula Support Program



Total number of women supported through our Doula Support Program

127



The remarkable increase in women supported through our Doula Support Program, and the achievements listed on the following pages, reflects an ever-growing awareness of our programs within the health and community sectors. It also highlights the efficiency of our programs and a steady increase in support from the community.

Importantly, these figures tell of an incremental and ongoing shift in the value placed on the role of the doula within the maternal health system.

*Reporting formally commenced in FY 14/15

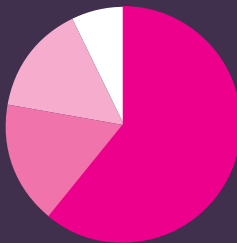


THIS YEAR WE:



> Saw a **25%** increase in referrals:

Service providers call on us because they know that getting birth right means more than just providing first-rate clinical care. It means thinking about social and emotional support and recognising that one to one support from a doula can drastically improve birth outcomes.



Referrals by agency type

- 61% from hospital/health network
- 17% from community support services
- 15% from self-referrals/friends/family
- 7% from migrant/refugee support services

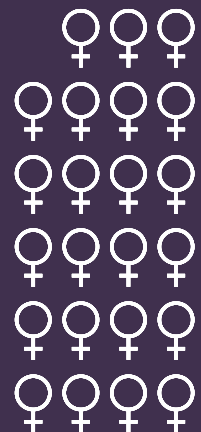
“As a midwife in the medically led care environment at the Royal Women’s [your Birth for Humankind volunteer doula] provided me with a fresh dose of inspiration of what it means to be with women. Her support undoubtedly improved the experience of Amala* and her family.”

- Midwife, Royal Women’s Hospital 2019



> Supported **23** women through our new extended postnatal care program

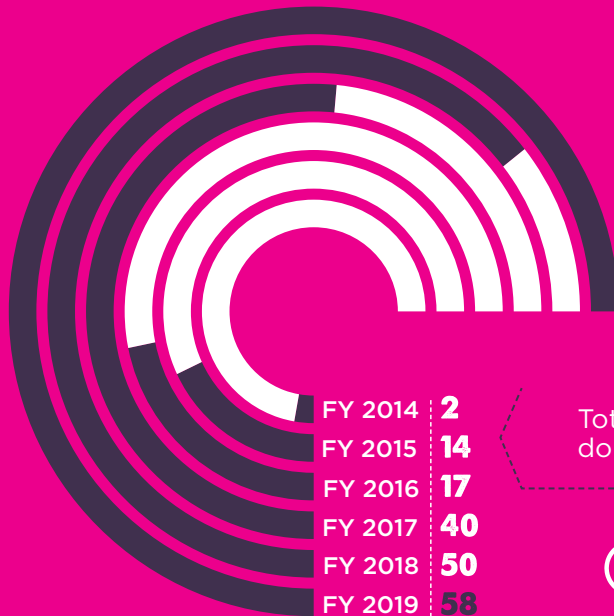
23



THIS YEAR WE:



Welcomed **23** new volunteer doulas into our team



Total number of active doulas per financial year



Our volunteers contributed more than **3,000** hours of service



Recruited and trained **7** bilingual facilitators to co-deliver Navigating the Maternal Health System, our support program for women newly arrived in Australia



Trained **16** healthcare and social support professionals in how to support women with complex care needs during pregnancy, through our accredited professional development training program



Supported births in **8** of Melbourne's largest public hospitals



Trained **2** new young mum mentors to co-facilitate our Baby Ready program These women have first-hand experience of our programs and will now help other young women navigate pregnancy and maternity support



Were selected to participate in **2** expert advisory panels – RMIT's Pregnancy and Homelessness Advisory Group to inform the second phase of research on the topic and City of Yarra's Family Services Advisory Group, to inform improvement of the council's parental information sessions

These figures highlight the progress we are making towards our strategic goals: to reach more women, strengthen our organisation and influence the maternal health system.

Importantly, they represent countless individual stories of strength, courage and agency. Each is a step towards building a collective culture of **trust, respect, celebration** and **connection** across our maternal health system.

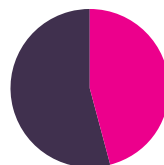


THE WOMEN WE SUPPORT

More than **7 in 10** clients had no support person:

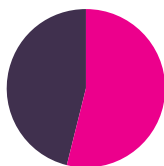


"I was living in a refuge during my pregnancy. I was so scared because I didn't know anything about birth and labour, but after talking to Birth for Humankind and hearing more information about pregnancy and birth I felt better and more ready to do it." - Client



46% had experienced trauma, abuse and/or family violence:

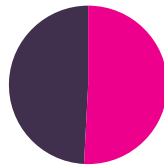
"I had been walking alone for so long in a cold, dark tunnel frightened before my doula started walking alongside me. By the end of the tunnel where the light was, with my doula's support, I could be ready to embrace my daughter as my companion in life." - Client



54% were experiencing, or at risk of perinatal depression:

"There is so much busyness that takes place around birth - health professionals aren't able to hold the space the way doulas can."

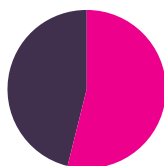
- Laura Lee, Birth for Humankind volunteer



51% were newly arrived migrants, from a refugee background or seeking asylum:

"We're not familiar with the health system in this country and it's very different to ours. My doula is an angel sent to us in this difficult time to give us support, trust and confidence in our journey." - Client

Our clients speak **28** different primary languages



47% did not speak English as a primary language

The most commonly spoken (primary) languages of our clients are: English, Arabic, Vietnamese, Persian/Farsi, Urdu



Photography by: Nynno Bel-Air



47%
were experiencing
or at risk of mental
health issues



10%
had a history of,
or were experiencing
substance misuse

1 in 5
were experiencing
homelessness



2 in 5
were under
25 years of age



AAMIINA From young mum to young mum mentor

When Aamiina was referred to Birth for Humankind she was living alone in youth crisis accommodation. She had made the difficult decision to disconnect from her family and community for the well-being of her and her baby.

Aamiina recalls, “it was a scary time, but it was also the right choice. It wasn’t a good environment to be in or be connected to. It was best for me to be alone because I could take care of being at peace, especially being pregnant with my daughter – she came first, always.”

Despite feeling lonely and sometimes depressed, Aamiina read and researched, seeking whatever help she could.

When she was referred to Birth for Humankind’s free birth support program she said, “At the start I didn’t know what a doula was... at one point I thought [my doula’s] name was Adoula! And then she came over and she sat down and we went through making a birth plan. And she asked about my feelings and what kind of experience do I want. And her asking me that, I thought, I am important. Let me talk about what I want.”

Aamiina and her Birth for Humankind volunteer doula shared a deep bond.

Aamiina called her “family”, saying “when I was there giving birth, she was like a voice for me. She knew everything I wanted.”

Aamiina knows what it’s like to feel alone and disconnected from your community and she understands how much the right kind of support can help. Recently she undertook training to become a young mum mentor with our Baby Ready program, so she can help other young women navigate pregnancy and the maternal health sector.

For her daughter, who she puts first, always - Aamiina wants more than anything “to be able to give to her love, so she can go out in the world one day and know what it feels like to be loved and respected. It’s very important for her to get all that because who knows what she can be if she can be the best version of herself.”

What Aamiina hopes for her daughter, we see in action. She works tirelessly to create a life that will allow her daughter to grow up feeling loved and respected. Now other young women experiencing disadvantage will benefit from her courage and compassion, giving them and their babies the best start possible.



Photography by: Kerrie McCure



OUR PEOPLE

This year we have benefited from the commitment of our volunteer board and a part-time team of 4.3 full time equivalent employees. We could not achieve all we do without the kindness, dedication and passion of our volunteers.

OUR BOARD



Kirstan Flannery
Chair &
Co-Founder



Kirsty Burke
Company
Secretary



Jeanette Royce
Treasurer
(since March 2019)



Olivia Mason
Director



Jo Askham
Director
(since May 2019)



Raj Gopiraj
Director
(Treasurer until
March 2019)



Mei Lai Swan
Director &
Founder

OUR TEAM



Ruth Dearnley
Chief Executive
Officer



Annabel Davies
Chief Operations
Officer



Kester Naismith
Operations
Coordinator



Rebecca Bartlett
Enterprise
Development
Lead



Cressida Blumson
Fundraising &
Communications Lead



Jen Branscombe
Programs Manager



Kristine Balfour
Doula Program
Supervisor



Cath Wright
Doula Program
Supervisor

Young mum mentors

Yeonjoo
Huda

Bicultural facilitators

Dursitu Adam
Saba Diqer
Jeiran Ferdosian
Farzana Muzafari

Ha Tu Thi Ngo
Hoang Nguyen
Phuong Vy

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer doulas

Our volunteer doulas are there for our clients during hospital appointments, labour and birth and in the challenging early weeks of parenting.

Melanie Abrams
Asiyeh Amrollahi Biyouki
Marion Anrys
Coco Axford
Kristine Balfour
Cecilia Barberis
Deb Bartrip
Kate Bentick
Laura Lee Berlingieri
Emma Blumer
Hayley Bourke
Jodie Burns
Nell Campbell
Kathy Cooney
Ellie Cullity
Paulette D'Argent
Ally De Cesare
Eliza Elsom
Reyyan Emniyet

Heidi Ernst
Barbara Ferguson
Julie Huf
Wafa Ibrahim
Julie-Anne Isaacson
Carolyn Jalhom
Grace Jeffery-Kingston
Deb Knight
Candice Lacey
Maison Levot
Bridget Loats
Cherie McKay
Bethany Meakin
Hela Mendoza
Debbie Michael
Susan Mitchell
Ingrid Moe
Erika Munton
Farzana Muzafari

Alicia Nicholl
Stephanie Norquay
Indrani Parker
Fernanda Perez Trevino
Gabriella Piemonte
Faith Popna
Bridie Ryan
Bubbles Segall
Rena Sergeeva Pashchuk
Ella Slonim
Jae Stewart
Annie Tayleur Bertschik
Carolyn Tranter
Liz Varney
Heather Wallace
Cath Wright
Claire Wyborn
Liz Yeomans

Office-based volunteers

This year we have also welcomed regular office-based volunteers who provide valuable foundational support.

Hannah Bambra
Kari Bynum
Mary Giordano
Ella Gustin-Craig

OUR FINANCES

Statement of financial position as at 30 June, 2019

	\$	\$
	2019	2018
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	258,172	124,238
Term deposits	200,655	200,000
Trade & other receivables	13,500	14,175
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	472,327	338,413
NON CURRENT ASSETS		
Security deposit	3,000	-
Total non current assets	3,000	-
TOTAL ASSETS	475,327	338,413
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade & other payables	29,816	45,982
Restricted use donations in advance	-	200,000
Short term provisions	26,243	15,123
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	56,059	261,105
TOTAL LIABILITIES	56,059	261,105
NET ASSETS	419,268	77,308
ACCUMULATED FUNDS		
Unrestricted reserves	189,268	77,308
Restricted reserves	230,000	-
TOTAL ACCUMULATED FUNDS	419,268	77,308

Statement of profit & loss and other comprehensive income
for the year ended 30 June, 2019

	\$	\$
	2019	2018
CLASSIFICATION OF EXPENSES BY NATURE		
Revenue	898,922	407,153
PROGRAM COSTS		
Doula Support	193,785	153,683
Education	23,631	10,904
Research	45,111	13,427
Personnel and Operations	235,759	139,839
Communications and Fundraising	58,676	77,415
Surplus before income tax expense	341,960	11,885
Income tax expense	-	-
NET SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	341,960	11,885



OUR SUPPORTERS

Our achievements are enabled by the generosity of our supporters.
Our grateful thanks go to:

OUR MAJOR DONORS AND GRANT MAKERS



OUR IN-KIND SUPPORTERS



OUR INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS

We are incredibly grateful to the generous donations we receive from our community supporters. Thank you for standing beside the women we support.

OUR CORPORATE & COMMUNITY SPONSORS



The great people at Goodwill Wine will donate 50 per cent of profits to Birth for Humankind every time you buy their wine. You just have to select Birth for Humankind as your charity of choice at the checkout. Go to www.goodwillwine.com.au



The creative minds at Mindfully Woven run artistic and relaxing weaving workshops and sell a range of beautiful homewares. They are generously donating 10% of all profits to Birth for Humankind. Go to www.mindfullywoven.com



Feminine Embodiment Coach & Founder of the School of Embodied Arts, Jenna Ward is guiding hundreds of women back into their body. Together with an international community of women, the School of Embodied Arts is redefining what it means to be fuelled by the feminine. Birth for Humankind is thrilled to have been selected as one of four charity partners to the School of Embodied Arts. Go to www.jennaward.co



BSS is an award-winning building and engineering consultancy firm, renowned for providing independent advice to owners, developers and builders on construction matters. We are proud to have been selected as BSS Group's charity of choice for their annual donation program. Go to www.bssgroup.com.au



Dr Ellen Ribolli is passionate about educating families about the role of the spine and pelvis during pregnancy and birth. She extends this passion to her pro bono support of our clients, so that they may have the most comfortable pregnancy experience possible. Go to www.backtobump.com



Every time you buy a hand crocheted animal toy, our friends at Bunny and Wolf will donate \$5 to Birth for Humankind. Just choose us at the checkout. Go to www.bunnyandwolf.com.au

OUR YEAR AHEAD

This year has been one of exponential growth. We have reached more women and families than ever before and engaged a record number of volunteer doulas. In line with our strategic plan, our focus now is on continuing to build a collaborative, credible and sustainable organisation, so that we may help build a more respectful, equitable and mother-centred maternal health system.

We will continue to deliver the same quality programs we are increasingly recognised for while we:



Expand our professional development training program, to reach more healthcare and social support professionals. The training will assist maternity care professionals to provide improved support for women experiencing systemic disadvantage and extend the reach of our work far beyond those who take part in our programs



Consolidate and strengthen relationships and work collaboratively to provide sustainable support for women, whilst also working to create positive change for the broader maternity care sector



Grow our team of bicultural doulas to provide appropriate, culturally sensitive support to more women from migrant, refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds



Share the findings of our PHD research on the impact of doula support

Most importantly, we will continue to live out our work through our values; trust, equity, celebration, respect and connection. Inspired by the women we support, driven by the passion of our team and motivated by the change we are seeing in the maternal health sector.



Photography by: Krystal Seigerman

**Thank you for supporting
Birth for Humankind.**

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North Melbourne VIC 3051

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www.birthforhumankind.org