

**Question on Notice**  
**No. 883**  
**Asked on 21 November 2013**

MR SHUTTLEWORTH asked the Minister for Health (MR SPRINGBORG)-

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise the number of home visits undertaken by Queensland Health midwives in the Metro North HHS (broken down by State electorate) since the introduction of the government's 'Mums and Bubs' policy and what benefits this program has provided to parents and their children?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Ferny Grove for his question.

The Queensland Government believes in giving children the best possible start in life and in giving parents maximum access to health services and advice on the care and wellbeing of their children. That is why the Government committed to enhancing maternal and child health services by providing additional access to home visits and community clinics in the first 12 months following birth. This commitment was to build upon services that were currently available through Hospital and Health Services (HHS) and was consistent with the universal platform for the provision of primary maternal and child health services available in Queensland, which included postnatal home visits and contacts, and free child health clinics in the community.

In 2013, the 'Mums and Bubs' policy began to increase the number of home visits to newborns and their mothers. The enhanced service ensures:

- all families have access to 2 home visits in the first month post birth; and
- all families have access to community clinics at key stages during the first year of a child's life.

In the Metro North HHS, the 'Mums and Bubs' policy has allowed more new mothers and families (who otherwise would have needed to travel to seek assistance) to receive support from qualified staff in the comfort of their own homes. Prior to the 'Mums and Bubs' policy, home visits were mainly delivered on a needs basis within the first week after discharge from hospital. The 'Mums and Bubs' policy has allowed for not only a greater number of families to be visited, but for this support to extend into the second week, when greater needs often arise. Following 'Mums and Bubs' visits, families are referred to Community Child Health.

I am advised that since the introduction of the 'Mums and Bubs' policy on 1 April 2013, through to November 2013, a combined total of 5,377 home visits have been reported across the Metro North Hospital HHS. This includes 2899 visits by the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, 1361 visits by Caboolture Hospital and 1117 visits by Redcliffe Hospital.

Further to this, mothers and babies with specific health needs have received additional home visits and clinic appointments that are not specifically part of the 'Mums and Bubs' program.