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Pregnancy app designed for local mums

Knowing what to expect when you're expecting a baby can be difficult. Mothers are flooded with information about what they need to do, where they need to go and who they need to see.

South West Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) has developed a new mobile app for pregnant women and their partners, which gives them important advice about pregnancy as they need it and can help them keep track of their appointments.

The app was designed by local health professionals, especially for women giving birth in south western Sydney hospitals.

Project Manager Kay Souter said after talking to pregnant women and midwives, she realised traditional brochures weren't working and they both wanted a new way to give and receive information.

"Expecting a baby can be daunting and women are given so much information, it can be difficult to process it all at once," Ms Souter said.

"The *My SWS Baby Pregnancy Journey* phone app delivers the information week by week, as women need it, in manageable sizes.

"The information is delivered at relevant times in the pregnancy and is about their local services. Best of all, the information is all at the mother's fingertips for her to look at when she has spare time or to pull up details as she needs them," she said.

Ms Souter said as well as being fun and useful, the app delivered important health messages.

"The app gives us the ability to get into women's homes and deliver important information about what they'll need for appointments, at what stage to call or come into the hospital during labour and even warning signs that something may not be quite right during the pregnancy," Ms Souter said.

"We've also had some great feedback about the information and advice for expectant fathers. We're hoping the increased engagement will lead to better awareness and pregnancy outcomes," she said.

The app was funded through the SWSLHD Innovation Fund and is the first of its kind in Australia to promote the pregnancy and parenting journey through Australian health services.

Ms Souter said the *My SWS Baby Pregnancy Journey* app had lots of exciting features including:

- Weekly tips on the baby's development, mother's health, health bookings you may need to make and emotions both parents may be feeling throughout the pregnancy and until the baby turns three months old.
- A calendar where appointments can be recorded and reminder alerts can be set up.
- Maps and navigation to the parents' chosen hospital and information about when to book into hospital, and what to expect at each appointment.
- A journal section where parents can write about their feelings or note questions to ask at their next appointment.
- A links page parents can use to contact local services and find useful websites for pregnancy and parenting.
- A photo album, where parents can take and save weekly photos of their developing bump, add their own captions and create photo pages for each trimester of pregnancy and for after their baby is born. These pages can be printed and shared with friends and family on social media.

The *My SWS Baby Pregnancy Journey* app is free to download and is available now for both Android and Apple and will soon be available in Chinese, Arabic and Vietnamese.