

Hospital measures obesity challenge for pregnancy risks Downsized birth plan

By Megan Frankel-Vaughan
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OBESE pregnant women in Mildura may need to have their babies delivered outside the region under a new framework for maternity services at Mildura Base Hospital (MBH).

The hospital's director of nursing, Janet Hicks said the new framework would involve changes to the management of care for women and babies with potentially higher-complexity needs.

"For most women, there is no change to the safe care we provide at MBH," Ms Hicks said.

"However, the framework responds to research in relation to mothers that are clinically defined as obese that demonstrate these mothers and their babies have worse outcomes, including



Julia Morgan

a higher risk of infant death."

MBH chief executive Julia Morgan said mothers with a body mass index (BMI) of 50 or above would be referred to a tertiary hospital – in Melbourne, Bendigo or Adelaide – for birthing as early as possible

but would receive all antenatal care at MBH during the pregnancy.

"This is about ensuring the mother receives the correct care and support throughout her pregnancy for the best possible outcome for mother and baby," she said.

Ms Morgan said pregnant women with a BMI between 40 and 49 would be individually assessed by the maternity team, which included an obstetrician, paediatrician, anaesthetist and midwife.

"The women will then be advised on the safest place to birth, which may be at MBH or may be in a tertiary hospital," she said.

"Again, it is important that these women receive appropriate antenatal care at MBH, regardless of where they eventually birth."

Ms Morgan said any woman who arrived at the hospital in active labour would be provided

with high-quality care at MBH throughout the birth.

"This approach is not uncommon in a clinical setting," she said.

"No matter what the planned treatment is, a risk assessment is done to assess where that treatment should take place to ensure the best possible outcome for the patient," she said.

Ms Hicks said antenatal care would still be provided at MBH, which was establishing referral pathways for shared care arrangements with specialists and hospitals to enable transfer back to postnatal care as soon as possible after the birth.

"It can be difficult if you want to stay close to home but it's important to listen to your maternity team's advice and plan for your baby to be born in the safest place," she said.

WEIGHING IT UP

BODY mass index (BMI) is used to determine whether a person is in the healthy weight range for their height.

The BMI calculation is based on dividing weight in kilograms by height in metres.

An average woman, about 162cm tall, would need to weigh 108kg to have a BMI of more than 40.

To have a BMI of 50 or above, the woman would need to weigh more than 130kg.

A healthy weight range for a woman 162cm tall is between 49kg and 65kg.

SOURCES: Heart Foundation and Australian Bureau of Statistics

Milne slams 'scare' over small lots

By Christopher Testa
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MAYOR Glenn Milne says opponents of development on small lots in Mildura's horticultural area are "scaremongering".

Planning Minister Richard Wynne has told Mildura Council he has no plans to revisit Amendment C89 to the Mildura Planning Scheme, despite community concerns it wiped the area from about 600 small lots in the pump districts.

Mr Wynne's justification for rejecting the council's proposal to allow development on lots between 0.2 and 2 hectares was that ad hoc residential development in the rural area would undermine the productivity of Mildura's horticultural area.

But Cr Milne said concerns that hundreds of houses would be built in the older irrigated area were unfounded.

He said the last time owners of small lots in the irrigation district got exemptions allowing them to build on their land, only one-third did so.

"The ruling as it stands doesn't allow anyone, a genuine farmer, to build a house unless he's got 10ha in one lot," Cr Milne said.

"If you look at the old irrigated area, there aren't any 10ha lots, or very few."

Mr Wynne's office told *Sunraysia Daily* it received advice from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and other government agencies before arriving at its decision.

Lower Murray Water was one organisation the minister's office said opposed the opening up of horticultural land for development.

Cr Milne said some farmers looking to build new dwellings in the irrigated area would need to buy up more properties from neighbours and the restrictions on development were holding back the horticulture district.

"Obviously someone in Melbourne or Bendigo doesn't understand the whole process," he said.

"The only person that had some sense was the (Planning Panels Victoria) member. He had a sensible approach and so did the councillors – they understood how it worked."

Cr Milne said the council would continue to revisit planning rules for the irrigation district next year.

He said the rules could also change under a new government.

"I believe that'll happen. Peter Crisp has been standing up and saying it's all wrong and I think with a change of government we could expect that, but first you've got to get to an election," Cr Milne said.



Kade Allanby, 15, and Rylee Allanby, 13, of Melbourne with cousin Lachlan Vernon, 13, of Mildura went to see *Sing* at Deakin Cinema. Picture: Megan Frankel-Vaughan

Hot line-up waits in cool comfort

PICK OF THE FLICKS

FILM lovers and families have flocked to Mildura's Deakin Cinema Complex for holiday entertainment and to seek respite from the hot, humid weather.

The cinemas' total capacity of about 800 patrons per showing was tested on Boxing Day, the traditional release of some of the biggest blockbusters of the year.

A midnight screening of the latest Star Wars film *Rogue One* on December 15 almost filled three of the complex's four cinemas, with many fans returning for a repeat viewing the next day.

Other films drawing people through cinema doors include Disney animation *Moana*, *Red Dog: True Blue* and World War II thriller *Allied*.

Cinema manager Chris Mitchell said this summer's film line-up was one of the best in several years.

He said the cinema's busiest period typically lasted until about a week before

PICK OF THE FLICKS

MOANA (PG)
Starring: Auli'i Cravalho, Dwayne Johnson, Rachel House
In ancient Polynesia, when a terrible curse incurred by Maui reaches the island of an impetuous chieftain's daughter, she answers the ocean's call to seek out the demigod to set things right.

RED DOG: TRUE BLUE (PG)
Starring: Jason Isaacs, Levi Miller, Bryan Brown
An iconic Australian story of family, friendship and adventure, between a young boy and a scrappy, one-of-a-kind dog that would grow up to become an Australian legend.

ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY (M)
Starring: Felicity Jones, Mads Mikkelsen, Alan Tudyk
The Rebellion makes a risky move to steal the plans to the Death Star, setting up the epic saga to follow.

ALLIED (M)
Starring: Brad Pitt, Marion Cotillard, Jared Harris
In 1942, a Canadian intelligence officer in North Africa encounters a female French Resistance fighter on a deadly mission behind enemy lines. When they reunite in London, their relationship is tested by the pressures of war.

school holidays were due to finish.
Mr Mitchell, who has been

working at local cinemas for decades, was not surprised by the popularity of the

latest Star Wars offering.
"I remember the first one we showed at the old drive-in back in the 1970s.

"It was big, huge – we would've had about 600 cars then," he said.

Mr Mitchell said modern cinema goers were blessed with plenty of choice.

He recalled a time when Mildura's cinema had just one screen, with *Crocodile Dundee* showing for 13 consecutive weeks.

"Things were pretty bad back then – everyone stayed home and watched colour television," he said.

Casey Kiel took her children Max, 8, and Denni, 6, to see popular computer-animated musical comedy *Sing* yesterday.

"They've been on YouTube watching the trailer," she said.

"I think they've been housebound for a couple of days and they got cinema vouchers for Christmas."

—Christopher Testa