***CONFERENCE ABSTRACT AND
REFERENCE LIST (FINAL)***

Continuity Midwifery B (11303|1)

Semester 2, 2021

Student ID: 3009382

Word count: 249

\*To be presented as a poster and three-minute presentation.

# Snoezelen rooms to promote non‑pharmacologic approaches for labour

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The environment in birthing centres is very different to that of a busy birthing suite. Women without access to a birth centre miss out on continuity of carer as well as promotion of non‑pharmalogical options for pain relief. Snoezelen rooms promote non‑pharmalogical pain relief within the birth suite. By incorporating multiple elements designed to stimulate peoples’ senses, Snoezelen rooms have been demonstrated to improve empirical and clinical outcomes for women, their babies, and midwives.

Women report Snoezelen rooms reduce anxiety, reduce pain intensity, increase partner involvement, increase environmental control, and improve satisfaction. Snoezelen rooms provide no risk to baby and positive effects on the relationship with her partner and baby.

At a time when medical intervention in birth is increasing, alternative settings, like Snoezelen rooms, can increase the chance of spontaneous vaginal birth and reduce the likelihood of medical interventions, oxytocin infusion and caesarean section. Birth environment and sensory distraction also reduce the uptake of intrapartum analgesia. Room design benefits midwives too by reducing stress, increasing feelings of safety, promoting empathy, and providing freedom for adaptive and responsive midwifery practice. Transforming two rooms within Centenary Hospital for Women and Children birth suite to be Snoezelen rooms, women and midwives will achieve benefits. Women can antenatally self‑identify a preference for using the rooms in labour. ACT Health will provide funding, which is offset by a reduction in medical intervention, analgesia, and caesarean sections. Evaluation will involve quantitative comparison of clinical outcomes and qualitative analysis of women’s experiences of the rooms.

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