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**Sharing Decisions for a Better Birth Experience**

Between 14-30% of those who give birth in Australia experience their births as negative and traumatic experiences, with up to 12% going on to develop clinical symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. Traumatic birth experiences have negative impacts on birthing people’s mental health, infant bonding and early parenting.

In research, a lack of clear communication, autonomy, and involvement in decision making is identified as contributing to a traumatic birth experience. Decision aids are tools used to promote shared decision-making in medical scenarios by presenting in an unbiased summary of information about options, benefits and risks for medical procedures, through written and visual explanation. Decision aids have been implemented in a range of maternity care scenarios where multiple medically reasonable options are available, and have shown to reduce decisional conflict and regret, while increasing knowledge. However, their implementation has largely been confined to antenatal care contexts.

This project is a pilot program to be based in an ACT maternity service, which will develop and implement decision aids related to intrapartum procedures, to be made available to birthing people both antenatally and intrapartum. Consumer and clinician engagement and input will identify three intrapartum procedures to be addressed within the scope of this program. The maternity service will provide training for midwives and other clinicians on the appropriate and effective use of the decision aids.

The primary aim of this pilot program will be to examine the impact of a decision aid on rates of traumatic and negative birth experience.

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