

Gidget Foundation Australia opens new perinatal mental health service at Westmead Private Hospital for expectant and new parents

- **Gidget Foundation Australia opens new vital psychological support for expectant and new parents at Westmead Private Hospital – the 13th service to be rolled out across New South Wales**
- **One in five new mums and one in ten new dads experience perinatal depression and anxiety during the perinatal period**
- **On Wednesday 2nd June, Minister for Mental Health, Women and Regional Youth, the Hon Bronnie Taylor MLC, is officially opening Gidget House at Westmead Private Hospital to bring essential free services to local mums and dads**

Embargo: Wednesday 2nd June – Western Sydneysiders experiencing perinatal depression and anxiety (PNDA) can now access GP-referred, free psychological counselling sessions at Gidget House at Westmead Private Hospital.

The brand-new Gidget House launches at Westmead Private Hospital at Level 1, 14 Mons Road, Westmead on Wednesday 2nd June. An afternoon tea will be held in the Maternity Unit at the Rooftop Garden to celebrate and welcome parents to the new service.

Gidget House recruits local psychologists and offers free individual perinatal psychological counselling services. The service at Westmead Private will be opened officially by the Minister for Mental Health, Women and Regional Youth, **the Hon Bronnie Taylor MLC**.

Hon. Bronnie Taylor MLC, said that a baby is a blessing to families, but it can be incredibly challenging for new parents to navigate this new chapter in their lives.

“Caring for a newborn can be a stressful, lonely and overwhelming time. The staff at Gidget Foundation Australia are passionate about supporting families in their time of need and the work they do is vital in supporting our communities. I’m incredibly proud to be part of a government that supports Gidget Foundation Australia,” she said.

Mike Flatley, CEO of Westmead Private Hospital said of the opening, “We are thrilled to be partnering with Gidget Foundation Australia and being able to support expectant and new parents with their journey. It will be wonderful to provide an even stronger support network for families that need a helping hand. This free service will help local families who would otherwise struggle to pay for specialist perinatal counselling.

“The beginning of the parenting journey can be a vulnerable and isolating experience. The services provided through this partnership will help parents to build a support network which is even more important if they are not surrounded by family,” Mr Flatley said.

Gidget Foundation Australia CEO, Arabella Gibson, said, “We all know the saying ‘it takes a village to raise a child’ and we want to ensure we are a community that is able to support parents. Mental health can be a complex and delicate issue among new parents, and this can make it hard to speak out. It’s wonderful to collaborate with Mike and the team at Westmead Private Hospital and we

hope this new offering can provide a safe space and encourage expectant and new parents to seek help if they need it.

“It is critical that we are able to expand to ensure that we reach as many vulnerable families in need as possible. Year to date, we’ve increased our service provision by 122% to meet the needs of the Australian community. This is the second service in NSW offered through Ramsay Health Care so it’s terrific to be able to grow our Gidget footprint at Ramsay hospitals across the country.

“Of course, it is unfortunate that there is such a significant need for these services at all, but we are seeing enormous demand for perinatal mental health programs in the wider community and we must be there to support new parents as much as we can.” Ms Gibson said.

Gidget Foundation Australia and Westmead Private Hospital appreciate that pregnancy and childbirth bring much joy along with a few challenges and believe it is important that expectant and new parents have access to services and support that will assist them with their emotional wellbeing.

- Ends -

About Gidget House

Gidget House at Westmead Private Hospital joins other NSW Gidget House services in Randwick at Karitane, Merrylands at Stockland, North Sydney, Manly at Royal Far West, North Sydney at the Mater Hospital, St Leonards at North Shore Private Hospital and Shellharbour at Stockland Shellharbour, as well as at Tresillian family care centres in Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Queanbeyan, Taree and Wagga Wagga. Interstate, Gidget Foundation Australia have opened Gidget House’s in Toowoomba at St Vincent’s Hospital (QLD) and Victoria’s first Gidget House in Clayton at Jean Hailes (VIC).

About Gidget Foundation Australia

Previously known as postnatal depression, perinatal anxiety and depression during pregnancy and early parenthood (the perinatal period) affects almost 100,000 Australians each year, equating to 1 in 5 new mums and 1 in 10 new dads. Gidget is the nickname of a vibrant young mother from Sydney who took her own life while suffering from unrecognised postnatal depression. She hid her suffering even from her loving family and friends. They created the Gidget Foundation, determined that what happened to Gidget would not happen to others.

Today, Gidget Foundation Australia assists thousands of expectant parents and their families each year and provides psychological services to [parents in need](#) through its [Gidget House](#) face-to-face services (at an expanding number of locations), its [Start Talking](#) telehealth program and Emotional Wellbeing antenatal screening programs conducted through participating hospitals.

Gidget Foundation Australia is a not-for-profit organisation, supported by the community, the corporate sector, the medical profession, the NSW and Commonwealth Governments, and the media.

About Westmead Private Hospital

Westmead Private Hospital is owned and operated by global health care group Ramsay Health Care and caters for a broad range of health care needs from day surgery procedures through to highly complex surgery. The 192-bed private hospital is co-located with Westmead Hospital and Westmead Children’s Hospital and is a teaching hospital of the Western Clinical School of the University of Sydney. Our highly skilled surgeons work with our team of skilled nurses and allied health professionals to provide the highest standard of personalised care to all our patient.



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