

You are invited to collaborate in the PAUSEMATTERS Study

The PAUSEMATTERS Study is **exploring natural pauses during labour** and birth, so-called **physiological plateaus**. Physiological plateaus are moments when labour slows down or seems to stop entirely, but resumes naturally after some time. Despite constituting a natural fluctuation of the labour pattern, physiological plateaus are at a **high risk of being misinterpreted as** labour dystocia (“failure to progress”), particularly in medicalised birth settings. This means that women with physiological plateaus are at an increased risk of medical interventions, such as labour augmentation, and poorer birth outcomes. The **PAUSEMATTERS Study is vital**, because it generates high-quality scientific evidence of physiological plateaus that can help **protect women from unnecessary interventions**. We are reaching out to you because you are offering **homebirth services**, which is the perfect birth setting to research physiological plateaus and healthy birth patterns.

“Our vision is to challenge time-based approaches to intrapartum care, and contribute to evidence that helps women and families achieve a healthy and positive birth experience”

We can achieve so much with your help!

The PAUSEMATTERS Study is not just about physiological plateaus. This research seeks to **strengthen midwifery knowledge and practice**, which is often different to bio-medical models of thinking. This study can also help **validate midwives’ experiences** with high-quality robust data, and can generate **supportive evidence for midwifery models of care** (such as continuity of care in private practice) **and homebirth services**.

We would love to welcome you on board of this important project!

What does your collaboration involve?

To make this research possible, we are looking to partner with **endorsed privately practising midwives (EPPMs)** as ‘practice partners’. As a practice partner, you would **help us recruit women as participants for this study** by handing out information booklets to **women who already plan a homebirth with you**. You would also **help us collect data** by filling in a short questionnaire for each women who participates in this study. **You will be paid for this important work.**



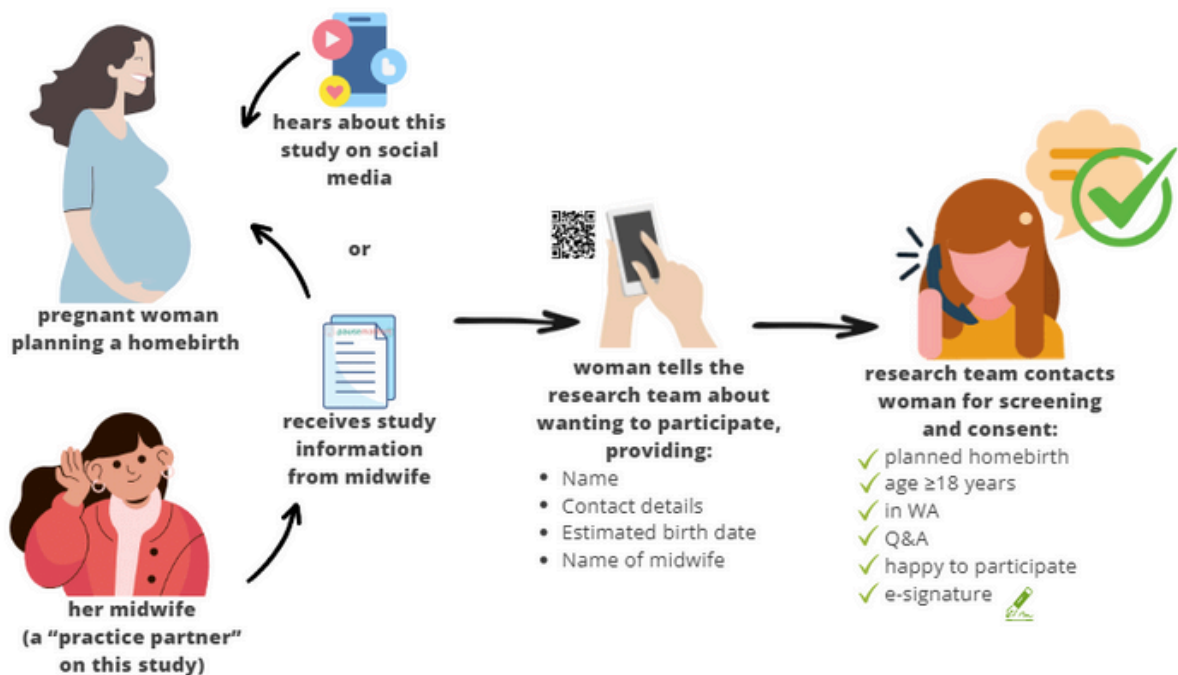
Why am I invited to collaborate as a practice partner?

You are invited to collaborate because you are practicing as an **endorsed private midwife** and/or because you are offering **homebirth** services to women in Western Australia. We are seeking to partner with **all EPPMS across WA**, so if one of your colleagues is an EPPM and has not heard from us, please let us know.

Who will participate in the PAUSEMATTERS Study and how can I help?

This study is **advertised to pregnant women who are planning a homebirth** in Western Australia. Midwives who are practice partners on this study are handing out participant information booklets to eligible women, who then decide if they wish to participate. Women may also see this study advertised on social media and decide to participate. In such case, if this woman's midwife is not already a practice partner, we seek to establish a collaboration with this midwife.

As a practice partner, we will provide you with participant information booklets for women, kindly asking that you hand out these booklets to women who book for a homebirth with you. **You are not expected to advise women about this study.** Instead, women will be asked to register interest online and to direct any questions directly at the research team. However, we believe that receiving the information booklet from their trusted midwife will make a big difference to how many women will decide to participate in this study.



As a practice partner, we will ask you regularly to provide numbers of how many women received the information booklet, to help us keep track of recruitment numbers (including numbers of non-participation). Participation is fully voluntary - if none of your clients want to participate in this study, this is absolutely fine!

What happens when women decide to participate in this study?

Women who decide to participate in this study have various options for (full or partial) participation. Typically, their participation will involve:

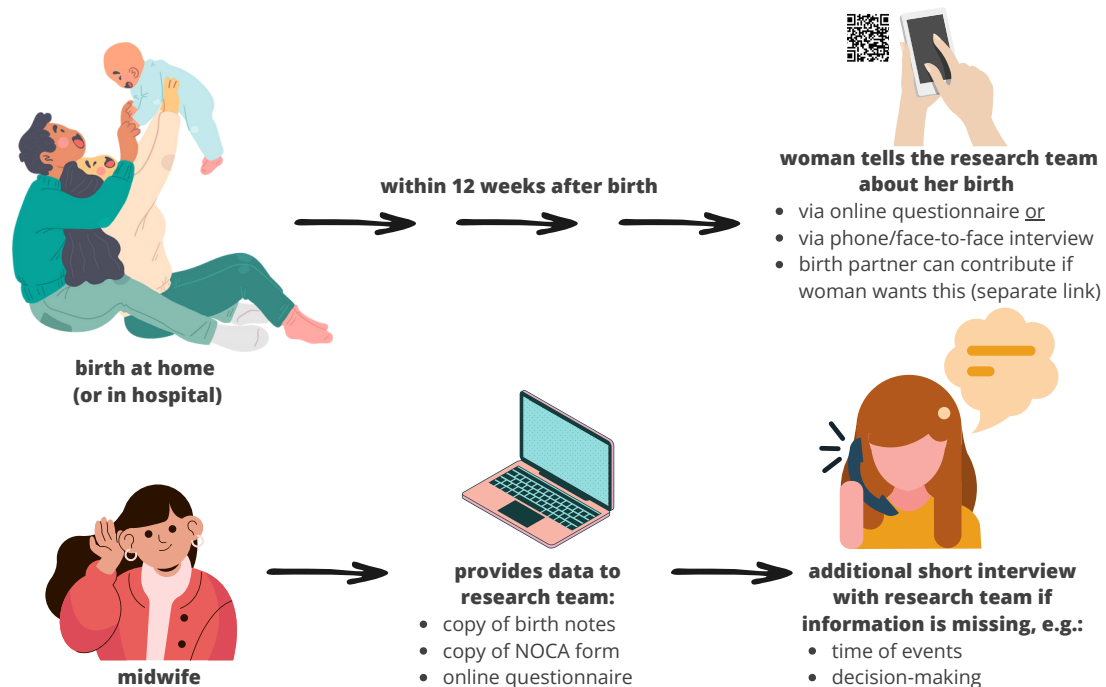
- you, as the woman's midwife, will provide copies of the woman's birth records to us
- the woman and you (and optionally birth partner/s) will complete a questionnaire.

For each woman who decides to participate in this study, we will ask **practice partners** to

- provide us with a copy of the **woman's handwritten birth notes** (optional)
- send us a copy of the completed **NOCA form** (Notification of Case Attendance, PDF)
- complete a **short online questionnaire about any plateaus** in this woman's labour.

All the information we collect from you will be de-identified to maintain both your privacy and the woman's privacy.

We will support you with this work! For example, you will have a dedicated contact midwife, who is a member of our research team, and who can answer your questions, help filling out the questionnaire, or collect information from you over the phone (if you prefer that approach over paperwork). Data that you provide will only be used for the purposes of this research, and will not be shared with other agencies (e.g., we do not share data with AHPRA).



When would my collaboration be required?

We anticipate to start collecting data between **Jul 2024 to December 2025**, which is when most of your work would be required. We will let you know when participant information booklets can start going out to women. If you like, we would also love to keep you updated on the overall project progress. **As a practice partner, you are a vital part of the research team**, and we hugely value your contribution to this study's success!

How much work is involved, and how much do I get paid?

As a practice partner you will be

- **handing out participant information booklets** with no tangible effect on your workload
- provide **recruitment data**, taking approximately a **total of 45 minutes over 12 months**
- provide **research data of participants** (that is: birth notes + NOCA form + questionnaire), taking approximately **15-30 minutes per participant**.

We recognise that collaborating on this study takes time away from your billable work and we would like to pay you an honorarium to reimburse you for this important work.

For each participating woman, for whom you provide research data, you will be paid \$50. If none of your clients decides to participate in this study over a 12 months period, you will receive a **one-off payment of \$50 for providing recruitment data** to us. So, your total honorarium depends on how many of your clients decide to participate in this study, as this affects your overall workload.

Payments will be issued from Edith Cowan University and should arrive in your bank account within 28 days of providing data to us. As a practice partner, you will be asked to complete a bank details form and payments will be sent **directly to your bank account**.

Who is funding the PAUSEMATTERS Study?



This study receives partial funding from **Edith Cowan University (ECU)**. This funding covers practice partner honorariums and community engagement, among other things. Researchers on this project receive **no other funding** for this study and have **no conflicts of interest**. We do **not** collaborate with formula or pharmaceutical companies.

I want to collaborate - what should I do?

That is great news! To enrol as a practice partner, **please email us**. Alternatively, you can scan the QR code below or follow the link to record your details, and a member of our research team will be in touch shortly. **We are excited to welcome you on board!**



Ciara O'Brien
Research Project Officer
c.obrien@ecu.edu.au
Phone: 0400731694



Dr Marina Weckend
Lead Investigator
m.weckend@ecu.edu.au
Phone: 0491601852

[Register Interest as a Practice Partner](#)

