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Dads to get early fatherhood feel

THE Dads 4 Dads program, funded by a \$10,000 grant under the NSW Government's Families First program, is designed to make pregnancy and childbirth more father-friendly.

Dads 4 Dads was launched at Bankstown Hospital auditorium on Monday.

Antenatal clinics at Bankstown, Fairfield and Liverpool Hospitals are offering a new program to support and include fathers in the lead up to and through the birth of their baby.

The new and innovative service aims to reorient maternity services and strengthen the role of fathers within

families and communities.

Male volunteers will be available to talk to fathers in the antenatal clinics and postnatal wards of Fairfield, Bankstown and Liverpool Hospitals.

As part of the project, positive images of fathers and their children have been installed in a Fathers' Gallery at each hospital.

"Becoming a father can be an exciting but daunting adventure," SSWAHS area manager for parenting programs, Carol Stevens said.

"These days, dads want to father differently from the way they were fathered and they know that good fa-

thering is something that is necessary to their own wellbeing."

New dads will receive a father's starter kit, with useful information on issues like how to be involved through the pregnancy, how their relationships will change and what services are available.

The project was funded by Families First and is a collaboration between Karitane, the SSWAHS (Parenting Program, Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Service, Arts for Health Program), Mission Australia, and Uniting Care, Burnside.



Dad Ali Chami with his new born baby boy Mohammad Ali Chami, born at 10.31pm on Sunday, April 9 at Bankstown Hospital with mum, Mona Chami in the background.
Photo by DAMIAN SHAW