



# LIVERPOOL Leader

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## Birth eased for fathers

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DADS will be able to better prepare themselves to cope with child birth thanks to a new program in Liverpool hospital.

Dads 4 Dads, launched recently, will allow men to attend antenatal clinics at Liverpool, Fairfield and Bankstown hospitals in the lead up to the birth of their babies.

They will also have access to male volunteers who will be able to talk to them about problems and fears associated with birth.

Adam Sahib became a first-time father on April 2, when his wife, Rohida Khan, gave birth to their daughter Sameera.

The Casula resident said he had heard the stories of men fainting during the delivery but agreed it was important they were there for their partners, and any help from such a project would probably go a long way.

"I think it's a very good idea," Mr Sahib said of the Dads 4 Dads program.

"I did a lot of reading and I have a science background so I understood what was happening and I think that really helped me."

Mr Sahib stayed with his wife during the 15-hour labour.

"I've got that experience now (of going through a child birth), but I think for any new father, any help would be good to help new fathers understand," Mr Sahib said.

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

Sydney South West Area Health Service area manager for parenting programs Carol Stevens said new dads would also receive a Father's Starter Kit with information on how to stay involved throughout the pregnancy and what services were available to new parents.

"Becoming a father can be an exciting but daunting adventure," she said.

"These days, dads want to father differently from the way they were fathered and they know that good fathering is something that is necessary to their own well-being."

The project is funded by a \$10,000 grant given under the State Government's Families First program.

It was instigated by Trish Ryan from Karitane, an organisation which works with the area health service to support families with children from birth to five years of age.