



## **Ambulance Service of New South Wales**

**media release**

**31 August 2009**

### **Helping New parents take the 'First Steps' in a Medical Emergency**

Welcoming a baby into the world is both a joyous and a nervous time for new parents. Juggling sleep patterns, feeding schedules and caring for a fragile infant are some of the many challenges that a new parent faces. In all the excitement of caring for their new baby, few parents think about what happens when things go really wrong and their baby experiences a real serious medical emergency.

As part of the 'First Steps' awareness campaign, Ambulance has designed for parents an Emergency Phone Card to assist them when they call Triple Zero. This card outlines information required by Ambulance Call Takers so that an ambulance can be dispatched quickly. It also gives parents and carers the information they need to give to attending Paramedics.

"Calling Triple Zero (000) is the one phone call we parents hope we never have to make" said Sarah Murdoch, model and TV presenter. "It is comforting to know that the Ambulance Service of NSW has developed a resource to help ease our anxiety in a medical emergency. It's such a simple and great idea!"

In 2008, NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages recorded 94,750 babies born. Of this nearly half (43%) are to first time parents.

Witnessing a medical emergency for anyone is undoubtedly very stressful. When a parent is confronted with a child unresponsive, not breathing or unconscious, the situation and fear is heightened when the patient is a newborn or toddler.

The Emergency Phone Card aims to:

- reassure new parents that in a medical emergency they should call triple zero for an ambulance;
- familiarize parents with the questions they may be asked when calling for an ambulance from an Ambulance Call Taker; and
- Inform parents of the type of information that paramedics will require when they arrive on scene to help treat the child

The Emergency Phone cards will be distributed to all new parents through the Bounty 'New Mother Bags' which are distributed by nurses or hospital staff to all mothers during their stay in both public and private hospitals. It will also be mailed out to all midwife managed birth centres in NSW to capture any homebirths. Parents can download the card for free from the Ambulance Website - [www.ambulance.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ambulance.nsw.gov.au)

**Launch of "First Steps" Emergency Phone Cards - Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August**

**Where: Ambulance Headquarters, Balmain Road, Rozelle**

**Time: 10:30am**

**Who: NSW Paramedics, Mother of two Michelle Ewens who recently called Triple Zero for her young son and the Ambulance calltaker Marea Jones**