

# 35TH ANNUAL HOMEBIRTH AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE



DAY 1

Saturday 18th November 2023



## FIONA O'SHAUGHNESSY (HYGIEIA HEALTH)

*'Birth Trauma: Our Collective Responsibility'*

Birth trauma doesn't just happen to those in the system, it happens to home birth families and homebirth midwives too. This presentation has the aim of raising awareness of the occurrences and consequences of birth-related and perinatal trauma that affects not just the birthing women, but birth partners *and* care providers. Hygieia Health is taking responsibility for addressing birth trauma. Using references to both current quantitative research, as well as our own qualitative research and birth stories, the first part of the session we will look at the important questions; 'what is birth-related trauma', and 'how does it affect us all?'.

The next part will be an interactive session where we'll encourage participants to reflect on and look at what they bring to the birth space through shamanic reflective listening tools.

The final part of the presentation we'll explore our collective responsibility to work together providing education, resources, tools and support to all people involved in the birth space but in particular for birth workers, to help identify ways to avoid preventable birth-related trauma (for the women and for the birth workers themselves). We will use part of our story as a framework for this discussion - encouraging the group to move away from an 'us and them' headspace to looking at what we can do at a care provider, community and individual level to actively promote and support safe and empowering birthing experiences. Holding birth as a sacred rite of passage that deserves respect and dignity, and upholds the sovereignty of birthing women.

Fiona's presentation will take place at 2:20pm on Saturday the 18th of November