



## Facilitators and Barriers to Young Mothers' Uptake of Paid Parental Leave

Dr. Cameryn Garrett  
Melbourne School of Population Health  
University of Melbourne  
garrett@unimelb.edu.au

Dr. Louise Keogh, Maura Bevilacqua,  
Dr. Belinda Hewitt, Prof Anne Kavanagh

- Introduced 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011
- “Financial support for up to 18 weeks to help eligible parents take time off work to care for a newborn or recently adopted child.”

- Be the primary carer
- Meet the Paid Parental Leave work test & income test
- Be on leave or not working when receiving the payments

- Work test eligibility requirement
  - Worked for at least 10 of the 13 months before the birth or adoption of your child
  - Worked for at least 330 hours in that 10 month period (just over one day a week)



<b>Baby Bonus</b>	<b>Paid Parental Leave</b>
\$5,000 non-taxed	Up to 18 weeks at National Minimum Wage (currently \$606.50 per week before tax)
Installments	Installments
Payment through Centrelink	Payment through employer or Centrelink

- Stage 1: Identify barriers and facilitators to applying for Paid Parental Leave (PPL) through interviews with young women who gave birth at the Royal Women's Hospital
- Stage 2: Jointly develop an intervention tailored to young mothers to facilitate applying for PPL
- Stage 3: Implement and evaluate the intervention at the Royal Women's Hospital

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- Two groups of women were interviewed
  - Women who received PPL
  - Women who were eligible for PPL, but chose the Baby Bonus (BB)



- Inclusion criteria for interviews
  - Aged between 16 and 25 years
  - Gave birth at Royal Women's Hospital
  - Met government's PPL work requirements
  - Australian resident

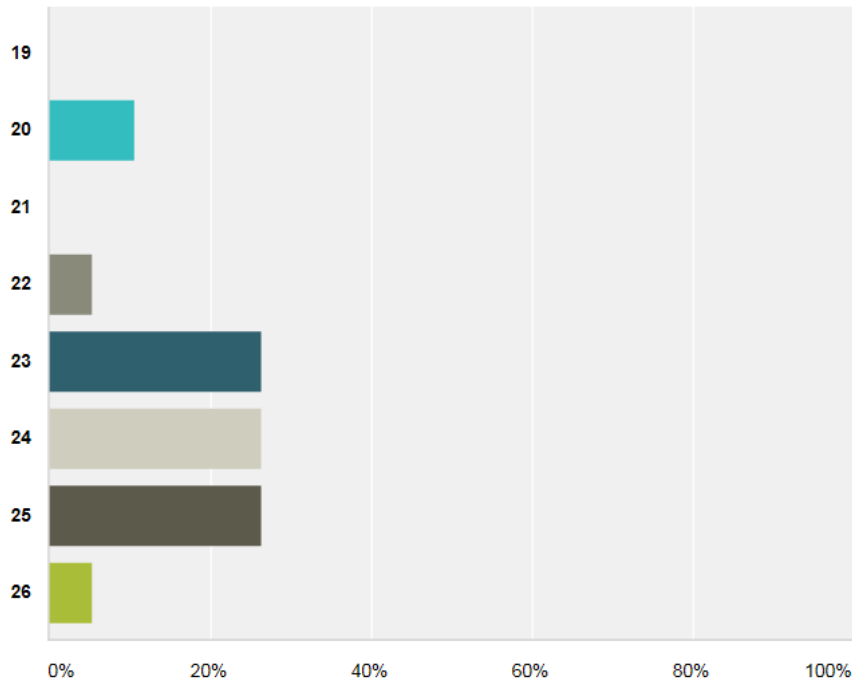
- To date, 23 women have taken part in the study.
  - 19 took PPL
  - 4 took BB



**Women who received PPL**

**n= 19**

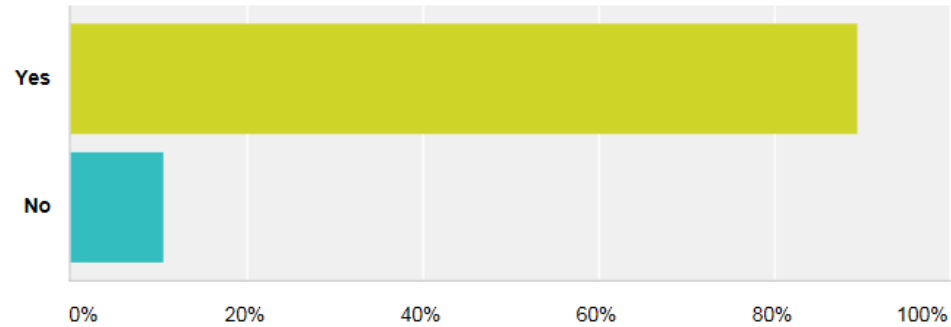
## How old are you?



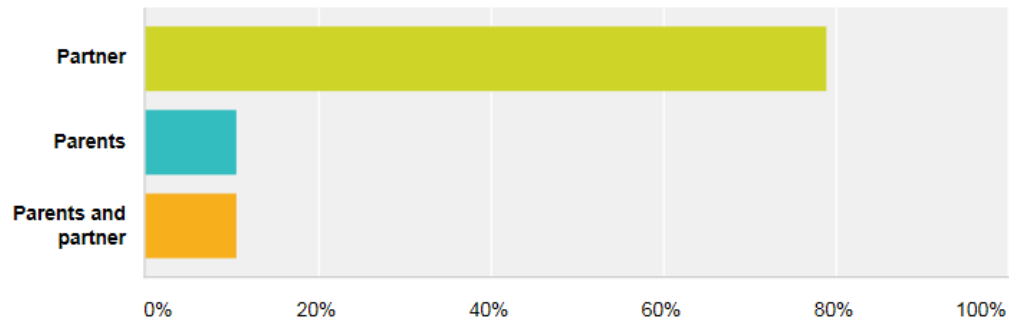
- Avg age of mother: 24
- # children: 1
- Baby 2-7 months
- 5 born overseas (NZ, India, Malaysia)



## Do you have a partner?

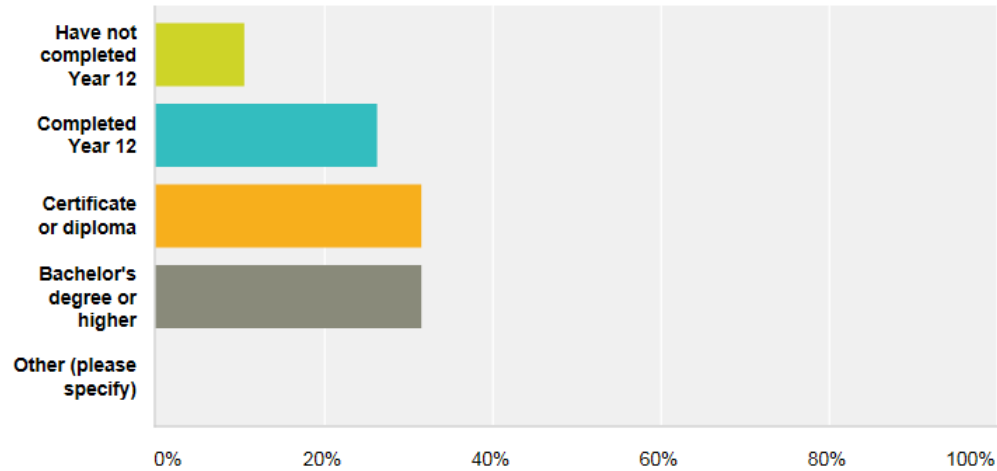


## Who do you live with?

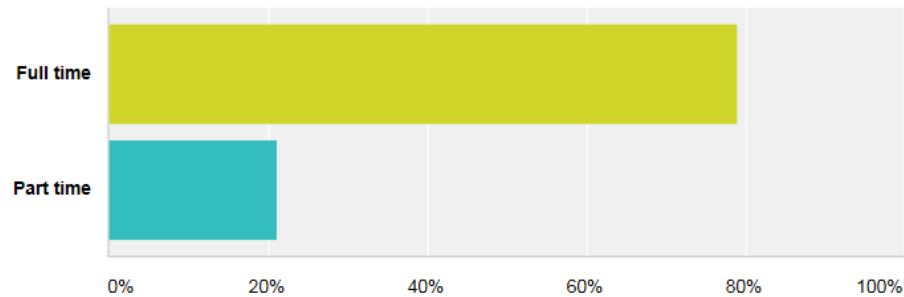




## What is the highest level of education you have completed?



## Job type





- Overall experience of applying for PPL
  - Easy: 5
  - Neither easy nor difficult: 7
  - Difficult: 7

- Government's PPL website
  - Difficulty finding application
  - Lacking checklist
  - Website was sometimes down



- Centrelink staff
  - Long wait on telephone
  - Calling or going into Centrelink and being told “go online”
  - Conflicting answers

“Having to wait on hold for an hour is racking up the phone bill, and getting eight different answers from all these different people ... When you’ve got a really small baby, it’s just really stressful.” (PPL07)

- On Government's PPL website
  - “You've got all these big long words ... I just want it in plain, simple English.” (PPL02)
- On PPL application form
  - “The wording [was confusing], and .. I filled out areas that I wasn't supposed to because I didn't see that you're supposed to skip.” (PPL01)

- Workplace assistance in accessing information
  - “It was really straightforward. Like the process is really good. We had all the information on the intranet.” (PPL 06)
- Assistance from Centrelink
  - “Everyone [at Centrelink has] just been really helpful and made it really easy, so it's been really nice ... The staff at Centrelink's been great.” (PPL03)



“It was by far a lot more money, almost double, for me to get the Paid Parental Leave.” (PPL07)

- “It's put food in his mouth, it's helping put a roof over his head and clothes on his back. Without that money, I wouldn't have anything.” (PPL02)
- “I think it's a fantastic thing ... Nobody wants to go through pregnancy and have a child and return to work as soon as they've had it. It enables you, I guess, to stay at home with your baby.” (PPL01)



**Women who received BB  
but were eligible for PPL**

**n= 4**



	<b>PPL n=19</b>	<b>BB n=4</b>
Average age	24	24
# children	1	1
Baby's age	2 to 7 months	3 to 7 months
# single	2	1
# born overseas	5	1
# sometimes struggle paying bills	8	1
Returned to work	0	1
Has certificate, diploma, or Bachelor's	12	2



	<b>BB01</b>	<b>BB02</b>	<b>BB03</b>	<b>BB04</b>
Why didn't take PPL	Didn't understand PPL, application process more confusing than BB	Originally applied for PPL. Took BB because better financially	Uninformed; "took easy option"	Uninformed; not interested





## Informing the Intervention

- Assistance filling out the forms
  - “It’s very lengthy, and at some stages it gets confusing, so just mainly support for that” (PPL08)
- Individual advice about whether PPL or BB is the better option financially
  - “If you could just talk to them and say look, this is how much I’m roughly gonna be earning, and this is my situation, and all of that kind of stuff, what do you think would be better?” (BB01)

- Mix of preferences for telephone, online, in person contact
  - “I think in person because you can take the form with you, get clarification on the areas that you’re not sure of” (PPL04)
  - “If you just had a baby, you don’t really wanna go anywhere” (BB01)

- Most women eligible for PPL received it (19/23)
- Main barriers: accessing and understanding information around PPL
- Main facilitator: assistance from workplace

- Continue with data collection
- Developing, implementing, and evaluating an intervention at the Royal Women's Hospital

- Karen Potter, Louise Bourchier, Lauren Krnjacki
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**Thank you**