



# PSSL QUARTERLY

NEWSLETTER OF PERINATAL SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA



## EMBARKING ON AN ISLAND-WIDE RESEARCH STUDY ON LOW BIRTH WEIGHT IN SRI LANKA

*See page 03 for more details ...*



**"Respectful Perinatal Care with Good Governance, Clinical Quality and Support for Better Parenting"**



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“Respectful Perinatal Care with Good Governance, Clinical Quality and Support for Better Parenting”

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**22<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS 2023**  
**THE PERINATAL SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA**

We are offering you an exciting and integrated array of innovative topics on neonatology, obstetrics and public health, to explore and rethink the future of perinatology....  
 Join us in this two-day aspiring event for collective awareness, empowerment and experience sharing in perinatology, focusing on Respectful Perinatal Care with Good Governance, Clinical Quality and Support for Better Parenting.....

**1st September**  
 7.30 am - 5.00 pm Precongress scientific Session for the Nurses and Midwives - Galadari Hotel

**4th September**  
 9.00 am - 1.00 pm - Precongress session - Robson 10 point classification - Galadari Hotel

**4th September**  
 5.00 pm - Inauguration and the PSSL Oration - Cinnamon Grand Hotel

**5th & 6th September**  
 Annual Scientific Congress - Cinnamon Grand Hotel

For more information <https://perinatalsociety.lk>, Sandali - 0777072520, Email: psslsrilanka@gmail.com

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Perinatal Society of Sri Lanka		
<b>Vision</b> To be actively committed towards achieving continuous improvement in the quality of health care for mothers and infants by promoting networking for providers of perinatal healthcare, supporting education for providers and consumers as well as improving availability, accessibility and continuity of preventive and primary perinatal healthcare services together with promoting initiatives toward improving health care of mothers and infants.	<b>Mission</b> The Perinatal Society of Sri Lanka is a not-for-profit multidisciplinary organisation striving to promote continuing improvement in the quality of healthcare from pre-conception through birth of the baby and into infancy. It advocates ideal and ethical care through education and research to influence national policies and encourage strategic collaboration among health-care providers and stakeholders in order to ensure optimal pregnancy outcomes for mothers and babies.	<b>Join us....</b> Our members receive quarterly newsletter and have access to our information service  To join us please contact: Editor, Perinatal Society of Sri Lanka. Email <a href="mailto:psslsrilanka@gmail.com">psslsrilanka@gmail.com</a>

# PSSL embarks on island-wide research study to combat low birth weight in Sri Lanka.....



Low birth weight (LBW; weight at birth <2500g) continues to pose significant challenges to perinatal teams working across the globe. It is estimated that 15% to 20% of all births worldwide are LBW, representing more than 20 million births annually. The two main causes of LBW are prematurity and small for gestational age (SGA). Prematurity is defined as neonates born before 37 completed weeks of gestation, and the SGA is defined as having a birth weight below the 10th percentile for the gestational age based on a sex-specific growth chart. In many instances, prematurity and SGA coexist. WHO and UNICEF had set a goal to achieve a 30% reduction in the number of infants born with LBW between 2012 to 2025.

The President and the Council of the Perinatal Society of Sri Lanka (PSSL) prioritized combating LBW as a primary task of their activities for 2023. Under the leadership of PSSL President Dr Susie Perera and Secretary Dr Asiri Hewamalage, the Council of PSSL appointed a Subcommittee to work on Reducing LBW in Sri Lanka. The Subcommittee comprised of Prof Sachith Mettananda (Professor of Paediatrics, University of Kelaniya), Dr Himali Herath (Consultant Community Physician and National Programme Manager for Intra-natal and Newborn Care, Family Health Bureau), Prof Sampatha Goonewardena (Professor in Community Medicine, University of Sri Jayewardenepura) and Dr Nimesha Gamhewage (Consultant Neonatologist, Colombo South Teaching Hospital).

The Subcommittee first looked at the available evidence on LBW in Sri Lanka. This evidence synthesis revealed the lack of essential scientific data to combat the issue of LBW in Sri Lanka. Specifically, the committee identified the following gaps in LBW research in Sri Lanka.

1. Lack of local data on the composition of LBW (i.e. what proportion comprises preterm and what proportion comprises SGA)

2. Lack of properly conducted large-scale studies that identify the determinants and risk factors of LBW

Based on these findings and the guidance from the President of the PSSL, the Subcommittee developed a proposal for an island-wide research study to determine the 'Prevalence, composition, and determinants of low birth weight in Sri Lanka'. The Subcommittee built partnerships with the Intra-natal and Newborn Care Unit of the Family Health Bureau to obtain the necessary administrative support for the study. The funding for the study (predominantly to cover expenses of data collection) was obtained from UNICEF Sri Lanka. The Ethics Review Committee of the Sri Lanka College of Paediatricians approved the research proposal.

The study will commence on 1 August 2023 and is conducted in thirteen selected hospitals in all nine provinces of Sri Lanka. The selected hospitals are De Soyza Hospital for Women, Colombo North Teaching Hospital and Kethumathi Hospital (Western Province); BH Gampola and DGH Nuwara Eliya (Central Province); TH Mahamodara (Southern Province); DGH Kegalle and BH Balanogoda (Sabaragamuwa Province); PGH Badulla (Uva Province); TH Batticaloa (Eastern Province); TH Jaffna (Northern Province); BH Puttalam (North-Western Province); and TH Anuradhapura (North Central Province).

Fifteen dedicated research assistants (pre-intern medical graduates) selected among over 100 applicants are currently engaged in the data collection of this study. The research assistants visit the hospitals daily to capture data on all live births occurring in those hospitals for two months, between 1 August to 30 September 2023. The Subcommittee aims to present the preliminary results of the study at the Annual Congress of PSSL in September 2023. Once completed, this research study is expected to give valuable information to direct National Policy Decisions towards reducing low birth weight in Sri Lanka.



# SECOND TRAINING PROGRAMME

## for Medical Officers and Nursing Officers on Neonatal Intensive Care



Identifying the importance of training the Medical and Nursing Officers in neonatal intensive care units for ensuring delivery of quality care, the Perinatal Society of Sri Lanka, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, commenced the first ever National Intensive Care Training for Medical officers and Nursing Officers in March 2023.

The second training programme of this timely initiative was conducted on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of June 2023 at the Castle Street Hospital for Women. It catered for the Medical and Nursing Officers working in Neonatal Care units in the Western Province and was supported by UNICEF.





## Building Capacity on

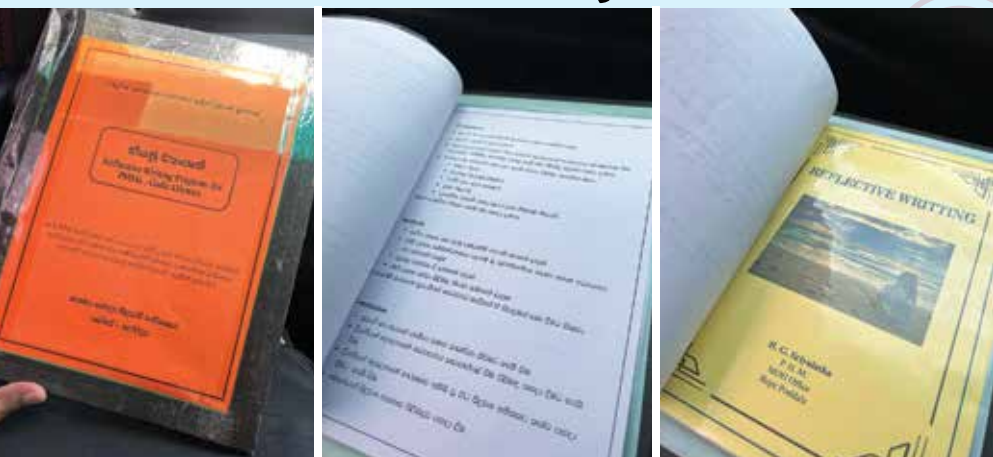
# Reflective Writing and Parenting in Polonnaruwa District

A capacity building programme on Reflective Writing and Parenting was conducted on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 at the CIC Agri Resort auditorium in Medirigiriya in the Polonnaruwa District. This was a joint venture organized by the Parenting Subcommittee and the Subcommittee on Reflective Case Study Writing, of the PSSSL, and this was the second workshop addressing the initiative launched to introduce reflective writing to public health staff.

The Public Health Midwives of the MOH Office Medirigiriya participated in this training programme. The RSPHNO Polonnaruwa and the PHNS of the area also participated. Dr. Amila Chandrasiri and Dr. Prabath Randoombage conducted sessions at the workshop. Group activities and presentations were included in the programme. The President of PSSSL Dr. Susie Perera, Secretary Dr. Asiri Hewamalage and council members Dr. Amila Chandrasiri, Dr. Harendra Dassanayake and Dr. Prabath Randoombage participated at the event. The Provincial Director of Health Services of North Central Province Dr. Palitha Bandara, who is also a council member of the PSSSL, and Regional Director of Health Services Polonnaruwa Dr. Kumarawansa were also present at the event. MOMCH Polonnaruwa Dr. Indika and MOH Medirigiriya provided support to make this event a success.



*Practice of* maintaining reflective journals established....



Following the first programme conducted to introduce reflective writing to public health staff in the Bope-Poddala MOH area in the Galle district in April 2023, it was very motivating to see the enthusiasm of the PHMs in maintaining their reflective journals. Dr. Amila Chandrasiri did a presentation on the progress and presented the journals maintained by the PHMs at one of the council meetings held.

# **CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME**

## **conducted for**

# **THE NATIONAL HEALTH CARE TEAMS**

## **ON DEVELOPMENTAL CARE OF**

# **THE NEWBORN**

The PSSSL, in collaboration with the Family Health Bureau (FHB) and the Perinatal Association of Private Hospitals of Sri Lanka (PAPHSL), conducted a one-day workshop exclusively for the health care professionals in the Private Sector on “Developmental Care of the Newborn”. It was held on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July 2023 at the auditorium of Lanka Hospital, which was participated by forty nurses and doctors involved in maternal and newborn care, from eight leading private hospitals in and around Colombo.

Dr. Susie Perera – President PSSSL, Dr. Asiri Hewamalage, Dr. Surantha Perera, Dr. Dilusha Atukorale and Dr. Nishani Lucas were present at the event. Sessions at the programme were delivered by Dr. Surantha Perera, Dr. Asiri Hewamalage, Dr. Pyara Rathnayake, and Dr. Nishani Lucas, followed by demonstrations and hands-on experience sessions.

Positive feedback was given by all the hospitals for the programme. This workshop will be of great benefit for the newborns and families who deliver babies in the private sector, as early identification and developmental interventions for at risk babies would have a better long-term outcome.







# Promoting Parenting Skills: A SEMINAR FOR 100 MOTHERS AT MEDIRIGIRIYA

Empowering parents through knowledge and skills required for fostering a loving and stimulating environment for their children's optimal growth and development is of utmost importance. Identifying this need, a seminar on "Danuwath Mawai Savimath Puthui" was organized by MOH Medirigiriya in collaboration with the clinical forum of Medirigiriya Base Hospital under the guidance of PSSL, to accomplish this direct communication with mothers.

It was held on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2023 at the Auditorium of National School Medirigiriya, with the participation of 100 pregnant mothers and 20 midwives. Four guest speakers who are experts in the respective fields shared their insights on various aspects of parenting: Dr. Prabath Randoombage, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynecologist of Base Hospital Medirigiriya, Dr. Sudarshana Bandara, Consultant Pediatrician of BHM, Dr. Heshan Menikgamaarachchi, Registrar of clinical nutrition, Mr. Palitha Baddegama, ICT & Attitude Development Lecturer.

This was a commendable initiative which highlighted the importance of nurturing children in a loving and stimulating environment.

