



CAROSIKA COLLABORATIVE

Preterm birth care across Aotearoa: whānau-centred, equity-driven

Carosika News

March 2026 – Issue 2



In this issue

Whānau Story Fran Higgins shares her story of birth at 28 weeks and how little impact this has on her adult life.

Practice Point Recommendations, practice points and resources for care in preterm labour.

Research Corner Developing a core outcome set for preterm birth in Aotearoa.

What to look out for Information on preterm birth resources and educational activities.

Who we are Meet our Carosika Whānau Awhina Rōpū Co-chairs.

Words and phrases we use

We believe the perspective and language we use support equitable change. We take an approach to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi and use positive framing with inclusive language, aiming to respectfully acknowledge diversity and difference and promote inclusion and participation of all within preterm birth care.

We integrate commonly used te reo Māori words and phrases without English translation. We hope that you will start to learn and use these words in your everyday practice. Some examples are: māmā – mother, wāhine – women, pēpi – baby, rōpū – group, Mahi – work, pānui – newsletter.

We also encourage you to use our 'Commonly Used Words' resource sheets for Te Reo Māori, Tongan, Samoan, Hindi, Punjabi and Cook Island Māori. <https://www.carosikacollaborative.co.nz/resources-whanau-information>

Haere mai, Talofa, Svaagat and Welcome

Welcome to our second issue of 'Carosika News', a quarterly pānui from the Carosika Collaborative. For those of you new to the Kaupapa, we are a transdisciplinary rōpū working across the pregnancy sector to achieve the best outcomes for all pēpi at risk of preterm birth or born preterm in Aotearoa – with a specific focus on equity for all whānau. Our name and brand has a unique whakapapa which has developed over time. The importance of recording our journey to allow understanding and transparency was highlighted last year as we sought to refresh our brand. To read **Our Whakapapa and Journey** in full, go to our website [Ko wai tātou/Who we are](#).

Through this narrative we describe the catalyst to our beginning and steadfast commitment to equity, we document a transition from being whānau-inspired to whānau-centred, and outline the evolution of our name. Gifted ideas from pēpi Carosika's whānau led us to start life as the Carosika Project, soon becoming the Carosika Collaborative, Taonga Tuku Iho, until a recommended review last year, aiming to better reflect the maturity of our mahi and our national role.

Through professional advice and kōrero between the Carosika Whānau Awhina Rōpū and our Steering Group, we settled on the **Carosika Collaborative**, with a strapline **Preterm birth care across Aotearoa: whānau-centred, equity-driven**. **Taonga Tuku Iho** is now solely used for the title for our clinical practice guide, with a strapline **A best practice guide for equity in preterm birth in Aotearoa**, with knowledge being the treasure being handed on to achieve best practice and improve preterm birth outcomes for all.

You can read more about **Mō Mātou/Our Story** including our **Kaupapa, whāinga, ō tātou uara/Purpose, vision and values** on our website.

SAVE THE DATE

The Carosika Collaborative Annual Education Day

Saturday 19th September

Book your leave now!

For the best Education Day of the year add this date to your diary, request your leave and prepare to join us in Auckland!

"Everyone was so motivated and passionate. It was such an inspiring space to be in. The organisation was exceptional. The presenters were very knowledgeable."
A 2025 attendee

If you would like to be added to our contacts list to receive Carosika News and other communications, email us at carosikacollaborative@auckland.ac.nz. Let us know if you have ideas for content you would find interesting and helpful. **Please join the Carosika Whānau**

Whānau story



Fran's story: Succeeding in life after preterm birth

Fran Higgins (Tūhoe, Ngāti Awa) has only recently begun to really appreciate the significance of her very early start in life and how much the extra care in her childhood is likely to have helped her.

At first, there was doubt if Fran would make it through pregnancy, after her Mum's waters broke at just 22 weeks. But by 26 weeks, her Mum was given corticosteroids to help her lungs, and her birth was planned at 28 weeks, aiming to give her the best chance of surviving.

Despite her birth being almost 40 years ago, Fran responded well to her neonatal

intensive care unit (NICU) care, going home to whānau after just 10 weeks.

In Fran's story, she tells us about all the extra things her Mum did for her growing up. Woolen singlets, wetsuits in summer, ballet, piano and bedtime stories are all familiar childhood memories. Fran needed some extra help with reading and writing and thinks her preterm birth may explain her dyslexia. However, she had made it through high school and an undergraduate degree before being diagnosed!

Fran is proud of her preterm birth and happy to share her story, noting *"preterm babies are resilient and can achieve a lot – given the right support."*

[Read more on our website](#)

Practice Point

Clinical practice guidance from Taonga Tuku Iho – The Best Practice Guide for Equity in Preterm Birth in Aotearoa. All resources are available on our website.



Care in preterm labour

Specific treatments and care for wāhine/people before, during and after preterm birth help to improve the chances of pēpi being born healthy and surviving. Some of these interventions should be considered and offered to all whānau when preterm birth is planned or imminent (for example place of birth, corticosteroids and deferred cord clamping), information about all of these can all be found in Taonga Tuku Iho 'Preparing for preterm birth when it is anticipated or planned'.

Some interventions are more specific to spontaneous preterm labour. **Evidence-informed practice in preterm labour** includes the use of **tocolysis** to allow time for a hospital transfer or the administration of corticosteroids; **magnesium sulphate** for neuroprotection; **antibiotics** for group B streptococcus infection; decisions about **pēpi monitoring** in labour; **assisted vaginal birth**; **deferred cord clamping**; and **thermal care** and **investigations** after preterm birth (to inform neonatal, postpartum and future pregnancy care).

To learn more about the evidence informing preterm labour care and review our national recommendations and good practice points go to individual sections within [Preparing for preterm birth when it is anticipated or planned](#) (QR code for access).



This section of Taonga Tuku Iho, also provides access to a number of resources to support your practice. **Our Whānau Information tool Care in Preterm Labour provides a very useful summary to support your conversations with wāhine/people and their whānau.**

Research Corner

Current research, publications and presentations that support improved and equitable preterm birth care.

Systematic identification of existing core outcomes related to preterm birth and the development of a core outcome set for preterm birth in Aotearoa New Zealand

Briar Hunter, Lisa Dawes, Lynn Sadler, Jordon Wimslett, Sue Tutty, Matthew Moore, Malcolm Battin and Katie Groom. *Paediatric Investigation* (2025) 9 (3); 241-250.

To assess the impact of Carosika Collaborative activities including Taonga Tuku Iho, our national best practice guide for equity in preterm birth, it is essential that we have an agreed set of outcome measures that are meaningful for whānau and clinicians and can be collected consistently across the motu (country). Core Outcome Sets (COS) are standardised sets of outcomes that represent the minimum that should be reported in clinical trials. They are also used for clinical care, audit, and other research. This study aimed to identify all existing COS related to preterm birth and use them to develop a preterm birth COS suitable for use in Aotearoa.

A systematic review identified a total of 18 COS and 348 outcomes; 73 distinct relevant outcomes were included in a Delphi survey to reach consensus on which were most important for us in Aotearoa. Whānau with lived experience, healthcare professionals and researchers reached agreement for 15 outcomes to contribute to the **Carosika Core Outcome Set for Aotearoa**.

A definition consensus process then reviewed each core outcome and established agreed definitions to further support consistency in reporting and use. The COS covers types of preterm birth, survival and newborn care, as well as longer-term impact of preterm birth.

Take a look at this study to learn more about COS and the outcomes included in the Carosika COS.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/ped4.70012>

What to look out for

Podcasts co-hosted by the Carosika Collaborative and Little Miracles Trust

Jadey Durey is joined by Professor Katie Groom for two heartfelt conversations with Katie S and Peyton who shared powerful insights into their remarkable experiences with preterm birth. Scan the QR codes to listen or visit the resource library on our website.

**the little
miracles**
TRUST

Supporting the whānau of premature and unwell babies

Carosika Collaborative webinar series for healthcare professionals

Starting in 2026, we will be releasing a series of webinars to help you get to grips with Taonga Tuku Iho content and put it into your everyday practice.



Carosika Collaborative Annual Education Day

Saturday 19th September 2026 We will host this fun transdisciplinary learning day at Grafton Campus, University of Auckland. Registrations opening next month. Look out for details on our website.

Carosika website, Taonga Tuku Iho and resources

Share the Carosika website with whānau to enable learning about preterm birth. Through our website you can also access Taonga Tuku Iho, our national best practice guide for preterm birth care and many resources to support your practice.

Contact us:

Email: carosikacollaborative@auckland.ac.nz

Website: carosikacollaborative.co.nz

Who we are

The Carosika Collaborative was founded in 2020 by passionate whānau, healthcare professionals and researchers committed to improving preterm birth outcomes and achieving equity across Aotearoa.

Carosika Whānau

Introducing people working with the Carosika Collaborative.

Sarah Rusholme and Fran Higgins are Co-Chairs of the Carosika Whānau Awhina Rōpū and members of the Steering Group

"Working together to represent the collective voice of whānau impacted by preterm birth is a great privilege. Supporting this voice to advocate for equitable change and improved outcomes for whānau experiencing preterm birth is our passion."



**CAROSIKA
COLLABORATIVE**
PRETERM BIRTH CARE ACCESS, EDUCATION, WHĀNAU-CENTRED, EQUITY-DRIVEN