



**Brad Hazzard**  
Minister for Health  
Minister for Medical Research

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **FIRST STATEWIDE MILK BANK FOR PREMATURE BABIES**

Vulnerable premature babies will have a better chance of fighting off life-threatening infections and disease with the first statewide donor human milk bank to open in NSW.

Health Minister Brad Hazzard said donor human milk will be pasteurised in a purpose-built centre, run jointly by the Australian Red Cross Blood Service and NSW Health.

“Around 1000 babies are born every year in NSW at less than 32 weeks gestational age, or of a very low birth weight and many need specialised care,” Mr Hazzard said.

“Breast milk is liquid gold for these little ones at this critical time, as it contains all the vital nutrients essential for growth and protection against disease.

“Many mums of preemie babies can experience problems with their milk supply but now mums can access donor milk, while efforts to boost their own supply continue.”

Pasteurised donor human milk is recommended by the World Health Organisation as a first alternative to infant formula when there is insufficient mother’s milk available.

Australian Red Cross Blood Service spokesperson Jenni Mack said the Milk Bank based at Alexandria in Sydney will operate under world’s best practice standards.

“Just like a blood bank, the Milk Bank will screen donors, collect, process and test the donated breast milk, then track and distribute this precious resource,” Ms Mack said.

For very low birth weight infants and those born before 32 weeks gestational age research shows human milk reduces the risk of the potentially life-threatening gut-disorder necrotizing enterocolitis and bacterial infections.

For more information on the Milk Bank click [here](#) and to download footage click [here](#).

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