**[Australasian Marcé Society for Perinatal Mental Health Conference](https://www.marcesociety.com.au/conferences/australasian-marce-society-for-perinatal-mental-health-conference/%22%20%5Co%20%22Australasian%20Marc%C3%A9%20Society%20for%20Perinatal%20Mental%20Health%20Conference)**

**Poster Presentation**

**“My Bravest Moment” - An Anthology of Hope**

**The Voice of the Lived Experience.**

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The Brisbane Centre for Postnatal Disorders (BCPND) was established at Belmont Private Hospital in 1991 to treat and support women with perinatal mental health issues. The centre assists women and their families in the process of adapting to the biological, psychological and social aspects of their disorder in an environment that is supportive, reassuring, and responsive to their needs and those of their infant and significant others.

To commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the establishment of BCPND, it was decided by the clinical team that the best way to celebrate the essence of the Unit and its programs was to give voice to the lived experience of those courageous women who have been through its doors. Letters were written to past and current consumers of the service, inviting them to contribute via their chosen medium (story, verse, or artwork) to an Anthology which would pay tribute to each unique journey. The women’s recollections included pre-conception influences, their birth experiences, the impact of trauma, and highlighted the importance of early detection and treatment. However, the single common denominator amongst the rich and varied penned experiences was one of hope.

The Anthology has proven to be a valuable tool on a number of levels. Primarily it afforded the contributors the opportunity to derive meaning from their individual experiences in a homogenous collective forum. Furthermore, it provides women, who will experience a perinatal mood disorder in the future, the opportunity to witness the expressions of hope. They may also derive courage from the fact that the journey, though painful and difficult, is one that invariably leads to positive change, growth and resolution. In addition, Health professionals will benefit in their clinical practice by reading this Anthology and “bearing witness” to the aforementioned lived experience.