mater education | OptiSim OPTIMISATION THROUGH SIMULATION

# Australian-first in-utero surgery

## In July 2016, Mater Mothers' Hospital conducted Australia's first in-utero procedure, performing spinal surgery on a 24-week-old fetus with spina bifida.

To assist with the incredibly complex, delicate and technical procedure, Mater Education first facilitated an immersive simulation, involving approximately 40 team members, including a team of specialists from Vanderbilt University Hospital, USA (where the prenatal surgery for spina bifida was pioneered), Mater's Maternal Fetal Medicine team, obstetricians and gynaecologists, neurosurgeons, plastic surgeons, sonographers, surgical and perioperative nursing teams, and observers.

The simulation was integral to identify any communication gaps—not only between the Mater and Vanderbilt teams, but also between the multiple surgical specialty teams involved in the surgery.

> To be able to simulate the surgery is an amazing opportunity to be able to step through the procedure, find out if there are any issues and to play out different scenarios to ensure that safety for the mother and baby is optimised prior to the actual day of surgery.
>
> **Dr Glenn Gardener**
> *Director Mater Centre for Maternal Fetal Medicine*


### Key outcomes

- Operating theatre reconfigured to help maximise efficiency in surgical team transitions
- Shared understanding and rehearsal of the anaesthetic management of the patients (mother and fetus), patient deterioration events and treatment plans
- Established postoperative care plan, including patient transfer from theatre to the care unit
- Perioperative staff were familiarised with the procedure and the specialised equipment
- Opportunity to clarify role of all staff at each step of the procedure

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