

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

From: Kasey McCulloch, Media Manager

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Pasta necklaces fit for royalty raise \$8,000 for stillbirth research

A Melbourne schoolboy who gifted a gold-painted pasta necklace to the Duchess of Sussex on her recent Australian tour has donated \$8,000 to Mercy Perinatal for research to help prevent stillbirth.

Gavin Hazelwood, helped by his mum and dad, set up a website to sell his handmade pasta creations after Her Royal Highness' unique necklace received worldwide attention.

"We've received a lot of orders from across Australia but also Canada, England, France, Switzerland and Iceland," Gavin's mum Rowan says.

"Gavin has been working on the necklaces every day after school and I have been staying up until 1am most days organising the labels and packaging.

"The support has been amazing but more importantly is the awareness that the necklaces are creating around stillbirth."

The six-year-old was inspired to help bring babies safely home following the loss of his baby sister Clara who was stillborn in 2014.

Gavin presented a cheque to Mercy Perinatal Co-Founder Professor Sue Walker AO during a visit to the research laboratory on Wednesday 7 November 2018.

"This shows us how stillbirth affects families in such a devastating way," Prof Walker says. "Stillbirth affects one in 130 Australian pregnancies and it resonates across families, friends and the community.

"The conversations that I've had as a result of Gavin's work have been so moving. We've had so much feedback about the program and it reminds people that young children also feel the brunt of stillbirth."

Mercy Perinatal is a three pillar centre of excellence in clinical care, education and research based at Mercy Hospital for Women in Heidelberg. Mercy Perinatal and researchers from Melbourne University are trying to develop a blood test to help women avoid stillbirth. The blood test aims to measure 'danger signals' that can let doctors know when a mother's placenta is stressed. These at-risk babies could then be safely delivered before stillbirth occurs.

To help prevent stillbirth and purchase your own gold-painted pasta necklace fit for royalty, visit imadeyouanecklace.com

– Ends –

For interviews and photo opportunities, please contact:

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