

I am writing regarding the complaints process for midwives operating privately.

I am a mother of two and I recently had my second baby at home with a privately employed midwife. This was a wonderful experience and I was very grateful for the care provided to me. I am concerned that the changes to handling complaints may unnecessarily and unfairly take away the option of birthing at home with a registered midwife.

I understand that the proposed changes will mean that if a complaint is lodged against a midwife their registration can be immediately suspended, or only allowed to practice within the hospital. This will be a serious concern for all midwives who can then no longer provide the care they have been employed to, and will lose their income at the same time. The pregnant women who employ the midwives will be left without care and will face unfair stress and emotions at the loss of their careprovider.

To think all this can occur without finding the midwife “guilty” of the alleged complaint? This is simply not fair.

Although there is considerable controversy surrounding homebirth, the sound research that has been conducted indicates that homebirth is a safe option. If midwives cannot provide homebirth support while maintaining registration, there will be a substantial decrease in the number of homebirth midwives, and an increase in women birthing at home without a midwife for support. This would be a very sad situation for pregnant women, for midwives, and for our society as a whole.