



Our Reference: 06BCW/1210

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19 June 2006

Committee Secretary  
Community Affairs Committee  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary

The Board of the Children, Youth and Women's Health Service (CYWHS) would like to submit the following advice to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee inquiry into *the Transparent Advertising and Notification of Pregnancy Counselling Services Bill 2005* (the Bill).

The Board strongly supports the position empowered through this Bill as it examines the adequacy of the legislation in improving regulation of pregnancy counselling, and will ensure counselling provided by government funded pregnancy counselling services are objective, non-directive and includes information on all pregnancy options.

CYWHS provides an integrated health and advisory service to the women of South Australia, through the Women's and Children's Hospital (WCH) and Women's Health Statewide (WHS).

It is essential that the health and wellbeing of women in South Australia and across the nation with an unplanned and/or unwanted pregnancy is to be protected. Women must have access to both accurate health and health service information to ensure they can make informed choices.

There have been a number of concerns expressed among a variety of service providers about the impact of directive or false pregnancy counselling to women in South Australia. The Bill will provide adequate and open regulation of pregnancy counselling services which advertise in the telephone directory and other publications.

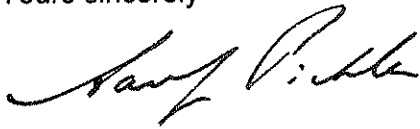
The Board has been advised by WHS that of particular concern is the impact on women in rural and remote regions, as geographically isolated as well as experiencing social and emotional isolation in relation to making choices about unplanned pregnancy. Many of these women utilise the telephone, their only means of support and information as a result of this isolation, but also for reasons of confidentiality in a small community. There is no real way of knowing how many women have been affected by these directive services.

CYWHS is committed to the provision of adequate health services to women. This ensures accessible services which are effectively coordinated and put the needs of women at the forefront so that women receive a holistic, integrated care that is timely and of high quality. Services need to be responsive to women's needs, flexible in their delivery and respectful of women's rights. This includes access to pregnancy support and safe termination services.

CYWHS recognises that women require comprehensive quality evidence based information about choices arising from unplanned pregnancy and offer these in a non-directive way, ensuring that women remain in control. The two key concepts that underpin our women's health approach are informed choice and control, and CYWHS refers women to agencies with these same values.

The Board would request that the process for tendering for telephone counselling services is an open and transparent one.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carolyn Pickles', written in a cursive style.

Hon Carolyn Pickles  
**Chair, Board of Directors**  
**Children, Youth and Women's Health Service**