

SUBMISSION

INQUIRY into Therapeutic Goods Amendment (Repeal of Ministerial Responsibility for Approval of RU 486) Bill 2005

SENATE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Dear Committee,

I should like to make a short submission for your consideration on this Bill.

The first maxim for a doctor is that they 'do no harm'.

The first consideration of this public committee might well be to accept that as Professor Sir William Liley has pointed out 'The only thing medical about an abortion is that doctors do them!' The basis of medical practice is related to saving life and curing or minimising illness. This Bill is directed to destroying a developing child. It is the antithesis of the philosophy of the Hippocratic Oath.

The number of medical indications for which an abortion might reasonably be considered is very much less than 5%, indeed probably less than 1%.

I urge extreme caution before **any** consideration of support is given to this Bill. Even if the increased death experience from RU 486 were a quarter of the rate for which evidence suggests, and it may be up to 10 times, when compared with the usual abortion intervention method, it would be a brave politician who allowed a bill with that difference to be enacted over their name.

The Cochrane Collaboration is the gold standard for current evaluation of medical treatment options (and I repeat there is nothing medical about abortion). I would ask that before any support of the Bill by the Committee that they were convinced that the evidence as set out in Cochrane database Systematic Review 2002, Issue 4 Art. No.:CD 003037. pub2. DOI: 10.1002/14651858 concerning INCREASED RISK of complications in first trimester abortions is NOT correct. Especially is this important in the current wave of publicity by some protagonists concerning its use in the country where medical support for complications is significantly less, even lacking. Any move to open access would most certainly carry with it the probability of complications without medical care.

It is to be hoped that the Committee will also recognise that there are significant ethical and social implications in using tablet abortion which are outside the Therapeutic Goods Administration's jurisdiction of concern.

Yours sincerely,

Anthony J Radford, MBBS, SM (Harvard), FRACP, FRACGP, FRCP (Edin), FFCM, FAFPHM, MRCP (Lond) DTM&H(Liverp)
Emeritus Professor
Formerly Professor of Primary Care & Community Medicine
Flinders University
South Australia