

Letter to Parliament for discussion

Re indemnity insurance for Midwives allowing Midwives to continue to provide the homebirth services for woman and their families, supporting these families with the choice they have made.

I would like to share my birth stories to assist with expressing my feelings across about the importance Homebirth can have for woman and their families.

True it is that Homebirth may not be for everyone. The issue is that it should be a choice for woman and with the current legislation that is seeming to be past will remove this as a choice for woman.

Please have a clear discussion on this issue as it will impact greatly on some of the population. Talk through the possible consequences and be clear that it will affect not only the midwives working in this way but the woman and their families who chose to use the services of midwives to have Homebirths.

I have had a read of the acts to be placed before Parliament soon and have included a few lines for discussion; this is with reference to Medicare. For me the object of this Act is to contribute towards the availability of professional midwife services in Australia. To provide this service the midwife working outside the hospital service will require indemnity insurance. Without this the midwife will not be able to provide the service and the Act becomes hollow as the possible services to the Australian public are limited.

An object of this Act is to contribute towards the availability of professional midwife services in Australia by providing Commonwealth assistance to support access by eligible midwives to arrangements that indemnify them for claims arising in relation to their practice of the profession of midwifery.

My first child was birth at a birth centre I did not get to know my midwife and when I felt I needed support I was given an injection. My child was born within 45 mins of this injection and required oxygen and tactile stimulation. I felt guilty for years and years that I could have done better with support.

My second was born at a birth centre under an Obstetrician as I needed to wait over an hour to be stitched with my first I was not going to wait this long again (midwives did not provide suturing at this stage)

My third and last child I birthed at home with the total support of a midwife that I grew to trust as she was able to help me gain the confidence to birth in a totally safe environment and I came to understand the power of birth for woman and their families. How birth is able to draw a family together and the woman to feel totally supported and not isolated away from the people she cares about the most. I was able to put away the guilt I had carried for since the birth of my first child and start to live. This experience for me is a very precious gift that I will always have. I did not have this experience, even though I had very minimal interventions, with my other births.

This experience of Homebirth is the same as others in life it can not be fully understood until it is experienced. Hearing lots of people sharing their experiences about homebirth can help to draw a picture for those who do not have the experience. I would recommend a long discussion on this issue. Homebirth is worldwide and very important for the health of Australia.

Your Sincerely
Margaret McGuire