

Medicare for Midwives issue -

I am asking for Medicare and insurance for homebirth midwives so that women can continue to have a midwife attend their birth at home. Otherwise many women who wish to birth at home will be forced against their wishes, to birth unattended from July 2010 (when midwives will be unable to attend homebirths anymore due to lack of insurance) - which although may not be as safe as having a midwife attend, in most cases goes well regardless.

I like many women who have had a wonderful and happy experience homebirthing, (or would like the opportunity to) are hoping the government will encourage an insurance company to develop an indemnity insurance policy for Homebirthing Midwives and for them to have access to Medicare, just like it is proposed for other midwives. Or, at the very least, the government will "allow" midwife-attended homebirth to continue past July 2010 and that homebirthing midwives will not face any charges for attending births after this date.

When women who choose to homebirth effectively release a lot of resources in maternity hospital for patients who really do want to, or need to, be there, then the argument for funding homebirthing becomes mute. I still ask now, 'why should I have had to fund the homebirth of my child', when women who go to hospital receive vast amounts of professional assistance without paying fees.

To enforce hospitalised birthing will force homebirthing to go 'underground' and obviously increase the number of women not seeking assistance for a homebirthing. This then brings up the other issue of unprepared women and partners entering into a freebirth homebirthing. Birthing is a sacred and fundamental Human Rights issue. The decisions and choices surrounding birthing our babies should not be forced upon us by anyone; authorities, families or partners. It is a woman's private choice, and should be able to be made with all the information she needs, given freely to her, with opportunities for her to fulfill her chosen method of birthing, as prepared and knowledgeable as possible.

Yours Sincerely
Jannette Tibbs