

Re: Inquiry into Health
Legislation Amendment (Midwives and Nurse Practitioners) Bill 2009 and
two
related Bills

I write to express my
concern about the above bills. I
understand that these bills will enable Medicare funding, access to the
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and professional indemnity premium support
for
midwives providing care for women to give birth in hospital.

Medicare funding for
midwifery care is long overdue. It is not acceptable however to exclude
homebirth from this funding and indemnity arrangement. By doing this
Australia is totally out of
step with nations such as the United Kingdom, Canada, The Netherlands and
New
Zealand.

These nations support the
rights of women to choose homebirth and fund a registered midwife through
their
national health scheme. In New Zealand
and the U.K women have a legislative right to choose homebirth.

The intersection of this
legislation with the national registration and accreditation of health
professionals will prevent homebirth midwives from registering. I believe
this
to be an unintended consequence and ask that you take steps to include
homebirth within the Health Legislation Amendment (Midwives and Nurse
Practitioners) and related Bills.

I support a system where all
consumers are treated equally, with the same access to funding and the
same
insurance protection.

Yours
sincerely
Mark Lane