

Dear Committee members; I hope you will be able to read these emails. I was a homebirth midwife in the '80's and 90's and my practice credentials allowed me to also have women birthing at the independent Launceston Birth Centre which has been in continuous operation since 1983.

It is a model for Birth Centres not managed by hospitals.

This country would truly make a backward step if it does not allow registered midwives to attend women at homebirth. these midwives need the support and backup of a suitable GP with a diploma of obstetrics and they need to be able to easily transfer women to the hospital when required.

BUT all women should be able to choose a homebirth if they are in a lower risk category and have a suitably qualified midwife to manage their case.

It is outrageous that families in this country be forced out of this choice given that we have been able to conduct many excellent births at home since the beginning of settlement.

There are problems with births in hospitals too remember,

there are unfortunate mistakes that happen in hospitals too

I still work in a hospital labour ward and I know that it is not perfect.

So dont think that women are not as safe at home, they can be if suitably screened and advised.

Midwives ought to be able to conduct births out of the hospital, and this country should not take a backward step and pass this legislation as it is allowing the monopoly of the Obstetricians who want to remove any authority from midwifery. This struggle is always there and thats OK but do not legislate for midwives to be removed from the out of hospital birthing scene.

thankyou and I trust you will have a chance to read all the emails that you will receive.

Yours truly
Jennifer Smyth.