

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.

I was seventeen years old when I became pregnant and felt very strongly about birthing at home where

I knew I would feel comfortable and cared for with my own mother on my birthing team. The thought that I might feel depersonalised in a hospital situation was very frightening to me at that age.

I experienced a wonderful birth with my daughter now six and I know this was largely due to my midwife's absolute professionalism in her work and the fact that I was in my own home with my partner, my mum and my dad right there too.

I believe that home birthing is a vital option for women. I call on my right to speak out on women's issues and I add my name and support to the hundreds of women in this region who will not accept a negative outcome towards homebirth.

Yours sincerely
Crystal-Dawn Jessica Green