

It is very important that all women and families, feel supported during their pregnancy and birth, and into the transition period of parenting. The

greatest resource in the country is the family unit.

I am a midwife, and I have worked in a caseload model of care, where I was the primary carer. A trusting relationship was built up, and women felt safe

to ask questions about how they would be able to birth their babies. The preparation for the baby was a time of learning, and most women birthed without interventions.

I now work in a Birth Suite again, where women don't get an opportunity to

know the midwife, the doctors control the births and the interventions are

continuously high, and the women are disempowered. The costs are high, the

women stay for days in the hospital, high numbers of women are induced, with

a cascade of interventions following. The midwives are run off their feet

with a heavy work load due to the interventions, and high numbers of mothers

and babies who are separated at birth due to the birth trauma to either the

mother or the baby.

When the midwife is known to the birthing mother, and the women have the opportunity to understand the birth journey, positive outcomes are achieved,

and babies are born without unnecessary interventions. There is less need

to separate mothers and fathers and babies. Family bonding is achieved and

breast feeding is supported.

These are some of the reasons why I feel, women should have choices in where

they birth and with a known carer of their choice. It is time that midwives

who specialise in normal birth, are given indemnity so that they can be available as primary carers for low risk women.

We will always need doctors and midwives, and there should be different models of care available for the different risks identified during the pregnancy.

For low risk women, Birth Centres, and Home birthing can be safely managed

under the umbrella of a hospital, supporting safe, undisturbed birth of low

risk women.

It does require legislation where by hospital management are responsible for

providing the model of care, and educating the public of the choices available.

Glenda de Vidas