

To Whom It May Concern,

PRIVATE MIDWIFERY MUST BE CHOICE FOR WOMEN IN AUSTRALIA

Here in the Illawarra we have only male gynecologists who refuse to allow a woman to give birth other than flat on her back on the bed. So, not only are we unable to choose a female gynecologist as a birth attendant, we have to be on our back with a man's face right in our vaginas if we want a gyno. To me that is absolutely revolting.

I have very straight forward labours, and even so, I was abused with my first child - flat on my back and unable to use my own hand to slow the child down through the perineum. My second child, in Wollongong's birthing centre, the midwives wouldn't just let me give birth to my child. They kept insisting I change position to suit them, instead of to suit what I knew was the best position for my birthing. They were very intrusive and bossy.

So I chose homebirth for my last two children. My midwife was simply there in case of emergency. I was allowed to give birth as my body was made to (in a vertical position). My milk came in on day two, in both cases, earlier than most hospital births. I didn't tear and didn't get the '3 day blues'. If there was an emergency, I could easily have been taken to hospital, just like any other medical emergency. I saved the public system thousands of dollars, and yet paid \$3000 for my private midwife. My health fund did not cover my second homebirth.

HOME BIRTH IS SAFE

HOME BIRTH SAVES PUBLIC HEALTH MONEY

HOME BIRTH MUST BE AN OPTION FOR AUSTRALIAN WOMEN

Why did my straightforward births have to be traumatic in the hospital? The hospital staff made it that way.

Fit, healthy women need to have all options available to them. Certainly, in today's climate there are more and more overweight, unhealthy, oedemic, lazy women. These women should be in the hospital system, because they are a health risk to themselves and their babies. No midwife would allow them to give birth at home.

A normal, healthy woman who eats real food, keeps normal fitness and is aware of her health and her body should be able to give birth however and wherever she feels, with the birth attendant of her choice.

INTELLIGENT, HEALTHY WOMEN DESERVE TO HAVE **ALL** CHOICES AVAILABLE TO THEM.

Our last big fight about women CHOOSING what happens with their bodies, was to make abortion legal. Why is it legal for women to CHOOSE to abort their babies as mere contraception, and yet it may be made illegal to CHOOSE to give birth peacefully, calmly and safely? C'mon, seriously!

Thank you

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