

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Natalie Newman, I am 31, and I live in a small town on the Mid North Coast of NSW. I wish to voice my opinion concerning Homebirth.

I understand the changing laws regarding Homebirth Midwifery will make it, in a way, illegal for Privately practicing Midwives to attend Homebirths by 2010. As a woman and a mother I find this very offensive. My choice to birth in the privacy and comfort of my own home in my own way with qualified support will be taken from me. What are my options for a safe, supported homebirth now? Registered Midwives won't be able to attend my next birth at home so who will support me? Isn't it my right as a pregnant woman to choose where and with whom I would like to give birth in this country?

My closest hospital is 15 minutes away. The maternity ward is 95% of the time filled with elderly patients because, unfortunately, upstairs there is no room for them. On the times I have visited friends who have just given birth, the maternity ward smells of Colostrophy bags and sickness which in my eyes is no place for a birthing mother or a newborn baby. If I had chosen to go further to a larger hospital, I face the chance of giving birth in my car! My labours for all 3 of my children have been fast. My last birth experience was a planned Homebirth. A very empowering and amazing experience. To think that I happily paid for my homebirth myself from my own pocket, how many hundreds or thousands of dollars have I just saved the public health system by choosing to birth at home?

It saddens me to no end that there is a chance this option will not have the support it deserves to continue safely in this country.

I ask you please to fight to amend these laws ASAP and allow Privately practicing Midwives the ability to have Indemnity Insurance and continue to offer these very important services to women and families throughout Australia.

If not just because women and families deserve it, but because we live in Australia, a place where freedom of choice is something we pride ourselves on.

Yours sincerely,

Natalie Newman.