

To whom it may concern,

I am currently pregnant with my second child and have employed an independent midwife to assist me to give birth at home in October this year. I previously gave birth in the public hospital system, with no intervention (i.e I had a natural, drug free birth with no complications or medical procedures required). When I found out I was pregnant again, I decided to research what options were available to me. My husband and I both work full time and are comfortable financially, and we also have private health insurance with top hospital and extras cover. From my point of view, all options were available to me - Private Hospital, Public Hospital and Home birth. After much research, I decided that I did not want to choose Private Hospital, as the intervention rates, especially with epidurals and cesarean, were at their highest levels in the Private Hospital system. I also didn't feel the need to employ an obstetrician, as I believe they are only required for complicated birth scenarios. My research also led me to believe that I did not need to give birth in a public hospital either, as pregnancy is not a medical condition, and there was no reason for me to take up a hospital bed that might be required for someone who actually needs it, so this left home birth.

My independent midwife is wonderful, and while this is probably the most costly option for me, the prospect of giving birth in my own environment, with an encouraging midwife who I have been familiar with throughout my entire pregnancy gives me much comfort. My husband has been nothing but supportive of my choice to give birth at home, and he is extremely excited by the prospect.

Please do not take the right of a safe, supported home birth away from women in Australia. Home birth has been happening all over the world for thousands of years and I believe it is the basic human right for women to be able to choose to give birth at home with a trained professional in attendance. I also believe that forcing women into the hospital system that may not necessarily need it is going to place more strain on our public and private hospitals, which is not advantageous for this country in the long term, given that we currently have an aging population that are already putting additional strain on these resources.

Please consider this submission.

Kind regards,
Tammy Oldham