

In regard to the legislation for Maternity Services, I urge you to include homebirth.

I would like to share my own homebirth experience with you, in the hope that you will recognise the everyday, normal nature of birth as opposed to the "medical emergency" which it is often viewed as.

When I found out I was pregnant with my 4th Child, I knew I wanted a homebirth. I had previously utilised Medicare funded midwifery services for my pregnancies and births but was increasingly frustrated by the hospital policies which seemed in opposition to me having a natural, normal birth.

I chose midwives that I knew were experienced and had the same view as I did about pregnancy and birth and employed their services (\$4000 for antenatal, birth and postnatal services for 6 weeks). I was not dissatisfied- I had little understanding of the benefit of homebirth, not only for myself and my new baby, but for my husband and three older children.

First and foremost, homebirth respects the basic right of a woman to be in control of her own body. The woman agrees to take responsibility for making informed decisions and educating herself about the birthing process. Secondly, my midwives knew me and cared about me and my family. It's a comfort to know that the people you have employed to provide you with health care actually care! Labouring in the comfort and warmth of my own home with my family around was wonderful, but nothing compares to the joy and wonder on my 5, 3 and 2 year olds faces when they witnessed the long anticipated birth of their brother. Unlike a hospital birth, where mum goes away for 2 or 3 days, there is no separation anxiety and very little jealousy surrounding homebirth. It's just natural and normal. My son was born between lunch and afternoon tea and otherwise the day was pretty ordinary.

In conclusion, please include homebirth in the maternity services legislation so other families can experience the joy of homebirth with a qualified midwife, who is covered by insurance.

Thankyou for your consideration of this important matter,  
Kind Regards,  
Meredith Wilson