

Senate Inquiry
30-4-09

National Registration for Midwives is a great, welcomed and long awaited for advancement for our practice.

Not allowing midwives to practice in their full capacity is limiting the ailing health profession of valuable members.

Midwives by definition and education are able to care for and work with pregnant women through their pregnancy, birth and postnatal continuum. To become effective health

professional, midwives require Medicare provider numbers to illicit routine pathology and ultrasound requests. In

Victoria, we follow the three centers guidelines for Pregnancy health checks which has a clear and designated approach for when test and investigations need to be attended (and I'm sure the other states have similar).

Surely if midwives follow these sent out guidelines and the national consultations and referral guidelines midwives will look after healthy low risk pregnant women and the higher risk pregnant women will be referred and managed by and with other the medical professionals.

Now to add the home birth aspect to the equation. There is such a small percentage of dedicated and determined women that seek out and attempt home birth as a birthing option.

Also the midwives willing to support homebirth women who choose this birth option is small why are we segregated out? If you take away the eligibility of midwives to attend homebirths you are not going to stop women from having their babies at home but you are going to make it unsafe.

These midwives are the gate keepers of normal during pregnancy and birth who refer and support women when needed to appropriate health facilities. Just the same as smaller hospitals refer and transfer to larger health facilities

when required. There is no difference. In the current climate barriers are being erected to stop continuity of care of these pregnant women by their chosen care provider their known midwife.

Will the law prosecute the ambulance officer, police and father's for catching babies on route to hospital? Or are the incidence of women leaving it to the last minute to go to hospital and end up having their baby on route going to increase? Isn't a well prepared home better than a roadside for the birth of a baby? Midwives do carry emergency equipment and home birth women are booked in to back up facilities.

You can get research to back up any argument so how about we look at the facts and statistics.

Perinatal Stats are available for each state and show homebirth statistics.

Procedurist General Practitioner/ Obstetricians insurance is subsidized by the government why not add midwives to that pool so that midwives can access insurance!

Kim McMahon/ Cooper

Midwife in Private Practice/ Lactation Consultant

Who also works in a rural Maternity Hospital.