



**Submission by the Guild of Saint Luke(Qld) Regarding the Motion for
Disallowance of Item 16525 in part 3 of schedule 1 to the Health Insurance
(General Medical Services Table) Regulations 2007**

Funding by Medicare for second trimester terminations should be disallowed for a number of reasons:

To address the Senate item:

2(b) The number of services receiving payments under this item and the cost of these payments:

- Since 1994, Medicare has paid \$1.8 million for 10 000 abortion during the second trimester of pregnancy (14-26 weeks.) This is a large amount of money for little economic and human return. To cut this cost, means that those funds could be returned to hospitals or diverted to real women's health concerns.

2© The basis upon which payments of benefits are made under this item;

- The system of payments has been misused. Fetal abnormality and life-threatening maternal disease covers too many areas. The funding should be stopped as the guidelines are too wide and able to be used to justify late-term terminations for too many cases -10 000 cases. Surely there are not that many fetal abnormalities and life-threatening maternal disease cases.

2(d) The effects of disallowing this item:

To disallow funding for late term abortion , the following effects will occur:

- A barbaric procedure will not be publically funded .There will be no incentive for Dilatation and evacuation, the common second trimester method of termination. At present, Medicare funds the live dismemberment of the baby and the piecemeal removal from below. A pliers-like instrument is used because the babies' bones are calcified, as is the skull. The abortionist inserts the instrument up into the uterus, seizes a leg or other part of the body, and with a twisting motion, tears it from the baby's body. The spine must be snapped and the skull crushed.
- The benefit is also payable for abortions performed using the partial-birth abortion technique. The entire infant is delivered except the head. Scissors are jammed into the base of the baby's skull. A tube is inserted into the skull and the brain is sucked out. To disallow funding for these terminations, means that there is less incentive to conduct the procedure.
- For some women, disallowing funding for later-term terminations will discourage them from termination, saving their long-term mental health, lowering their risk of breast cancer, lessening their rate of suicide, reduce the

risk of miscarriage and premature delivery in subsequent pregnancies,
providing better health outcomes that will run for the rest of their lives.

To disallow funding will bring economic and health benefits to all Australians,
especially women..

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