

Exposure Draft – Health Practitioner Regulation National Law 2009

Amanda Hansen
To NRAIP 22/7/09 11:36AM

Re Independent (Homebirth) Midwifery

I wish to draw attention to section 101 (ii) in which a registered health practitioner must not practise the health profession unless professional indemnity insurance arrangements are in force. Also to section 148 in which a person must not direct or incite a registered health practitioner that amounts to unprofessional conduct or professional misconduct, incurring penalties.

Registered homebirth midwives are not covered by indemnity insurance due to the small numbers practicing and therefore it is not viable to indemnify them. The introduction of this legislation means that homebirth midwives will no longer be legally allowed to practice midwifery without insurance.

Therefore a registered homebirth midwife will not be able to attend a women's birth in her home, as they have in the past. This not only affects me but every women in Australia who chooses to birth at home with a registered midwife. This will also affect families who wish to choose the continuity of care and support that a midwife provides and therefore affects unborn children.

I am forced to have a hospital birth for my first child because of financial constraints but would dearly love the option for my second child. I have read that homebirths are common and preferred in Holland and other European countries and that this approach has a documented efficacy. Why is it that we are so resistant to what is natural and most nurturing for a woman who has the most important job in the world - that of giving birth to future generations. How a woman gives birth has a huge impact on their ability to connect with their baby, and to help their baby form secure attachments. This is absolutely essential for growing healthy, happy, emotionally balanced human beings.

This legislation will vastly limit a women's choice to birth where and with whom she chooses. This will force women into hospital systems that over-medicalise birth or to birth at home without the support of a qualified professional midwife of their choice.

I am opposed to the introduction of this legislation and I suggest that an amendment be made to include an exemption for Independent Midwives to require indemnity insurance.

Yours Sincerely

Amanda Hansen