

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to urgently express my concern regarding the processing of complaints against independent midwives.

I am a pregnant woman who has employed a midwife but, due to current policy which suspends her right to continue seeing me whilst allegations made against her are investigated, I am now left without a care provider, as a hospital has made a complaint against her.

I find it indefensible that any hospital may put in motion such a complaint, one that may be utterly without merit, having not yet been rigorously investigated, but whilst this complaint makes its way slowly through the required motions, the midwife and every family reliant upon her for care is left hanging.

This policy is now enforcing the opposite of what it seems to have been intended for - it has reduced the level of care women are receiving.

I would also like to note that should I choose to employ a private OBGYN, I could unknowingly hire someone who has current lawsuits and complaints against them that do not in any way interrupt their practice. Outcomes of settled lawsuits are often kept confidential and I know, from experience, that clients are frequently unaware of these situations.

This hypocrisy makes it very hard to credit the idea that the current system for processing complaints against midwives is anything other than a witch hunt masquerading as concern for the public - at best, it is condescending and misguided.

For such a process to have the integrity it is owed, for the process to have the integrity CONSUMERS are owed, for it to honour the suggestion that it is in place to ensure safety, changes must be made that allow for the process to occur ethically and fairly.

It is inappropriate for a complaint to require so little cost to one party when it is utterly devastating for another. It, without a doubt, leaves one party guilty until proven innocent. What defence can be offered for operating any investigation at such a high cost and at such odds with any other process of Australian law or justice?

I hope changes can be made, as the cost for women across Australia is too high for it to continue this way.

Regards -

Chloe Coulthard