

To whom it may concern,

The current situation by which independent midwives are being processed if there has been a complaint against them is totally unacceptable, unfair, unjust and unethical. No conditions should be placed on any midwife before an investigation has taken place.

Guilty before proven innocent is not how a mature, rational society works whether you're talking about doctors or independent midwives.

Such a process is also not upheld in society as it opposes legal & logical precedent resulting in parents possibly risking an unsafe homebirth if their midwife had genuine restrictions in place. Differentiating between proven & unproven complaints & making it clear who placed those complaints (medical, parents, midwives etc) is a matter essential for informed birthing choice by parents. It is the government's responsibility to ensure accurate information & a realistic process of complaint & restrictions is put in place.

If these laws are truly designed to protect the parents then doctors (OB/Gyns) & midwives within the hospital system should also have to come under the same legislation & process. Under the guilty before proven innocent process & with the level of complaints & legal actions commencing within the hospital birthing system it would take a matter of months for the hospital birthing system to draw to a halt unable to function or provide adequate services to birthing women while medical staff were awaiting investigation.

On a personal level I have grave concerns that at any time my midwife could find her registration under restriction and this would exclude her from continuing to be my main care provider. This will force me into the hospital system or to choose to free birth. By doing either of these my fundamental right to birth where I feel safe is being jeopardised, therefore so is my child's birth.

I request that an urgent review of this process takes place immediately and that some balance be restored. Midwifery and homebirth is an essential part of birth for a small but growing number of the Australian community, women are turning back to midwifery to help them birth for a reason.

I request the government take due-care to ensure midwifery & homebirthing remains free of bias & hypocrisy & safely available for all Australians, the only way to do this is to provide a fair & commonsense process of medical complaint & restrictions.