# POTENTIAL MEDICAL SYSTEMS MESH CLASS ACTION
# SENATE INQUIRY SUBMISSION

1. As one of many women who have been affected by this mesh problem I feel that something should be done and that the Senate should look into why this mesh was allowed to be used by Specialists and Doctors who thought they were doing the right thing by their patients to insert this problem mesh.

I have had an [redacted] mesh inserted in my vagina for a prolapsed bladder, in January 2007 and have since had 12 procedures to correct the problems that I believe came from this faulty mesh implant.

2. When I first had the prolapse, both bladder and bowel, (about September 2006) I went to my local GP. As I live in [redacted] my GP referred me to an Obstetrician & Gynaecologist in [redacted] After waiting weeks to see him he took one look and said my condition was too bad for him to treat and referred me to a [redacted] Specialist Urogynaecologist. After another long wait to be referred to him my Specialist Doctor told me on my initial visit to him in [redacted] that he had this really good mesh sling that he had used on many occasions and was successful and showed it to me, it looked like “fly screen wire” to me but I trusted that he knew what he was doing. He did explain how he would do the operation and fix the prolapsed bowel at the same time.

From the moment I came out of anaesthetic after my first operation to insert the mesh I was in agony. My specialist had to give me morphine to reduce the pain I was in and then put me on morphine based tablets to ease the pain for months following. From the moment I could sit up it felt like I was sitting on barbed wire. I was in so much pain I could not return to work for nearly three (3) months. Once home and after continually going to my local GP who advised it was the stitches not dissolved yet I asked for another referral to my Specialist in [redacted] who checked me out and advised it was the mesh poking through and scheduled an operation ( April 2007) to remove the protruding mesh. Within a week I had the same symptoms and another visit to my [redacted] specialist who advised the mesh had poked through again. Another operation (June 2007) to remove the further protruding mesh. By this time my bowel had prolapsed again so back to the operating theatre in [redacted] again (November 2007). After more check-ups and visits to [redacted] my Specialist advised he should do another procedure to ascertain the cause of the pain I was having. After this 5th visit to the operating theatre (January 2009) he advised after checking me out that the mesh should be removed. Another operation, the 6th, (May 2009) was scheduled and the mesh removed. My specialist advised that the skin had not grown through the mesh and it was easy to remove.

Within months my bladder prolapsed again as there was nothing to hold it up so to the [redacted] specialist again and another operation (November 2009) to insert a different type of mesh which has since held up though with some pain and painful muscle spasms, but it is bearable after the pain I had been through previously. I am now continually on Amitriptyline hydrochloride tablets to relax the muscles.

By now my bowel had prolapsed again and required further surgery, the 8th, (June 2010) which I attribute to the failure and many procedures to fix the problems caused by the original [redacted] mesh. Since then I have had a further 4 procedures to try to repair the bowel prolapses, including Botox injections to stop the pain.

I have even had a course of laser treatments (6) which was very expensive and painful but only slightly helped with the pain and shrinking the prolapse bowel.

The last procedure, the 12th, for bowel prolapse I had was in [redacted] Hospital with my [redacted] Specialist on 22 April 2016 with a different procedure and to date it has been successful with reduced pain levels.

5. In 2013 after time off from work for many surgeries and visits to [redacted] for check-ups I was dismissed from my work as I "was unreliable" due to all the time I had to take off. I was very sad to leave this position that I had held for many years.

After 10 years of constant pain and 12 procedures and visits to [redacted] for check-ups and operations, my life has been quite miserable not to mention that my husband has had to have time off work to look after me and our quality of life has been severely diminished. We have used up a lot of our savings, holiday pays, sick leave etc in all this time. I could not even enjoy going out for a coffee or a meal with my husband and friends as it was too painful to sit for any length of time and still is. Our intimate relations have been non-existent as it is still too painful. I cannot do most of the things I enjoy like gardening as I cannot lift anything too heavy, I was advised my load limit was 4 kgs which I try to stick to as I do not want any more surgeries.

I feel that this mesh was not tested enough or properly.

I would like a register of women who have had these problems so that women who are facing this could ring, write or email for their input on their experiences and this list given to specialists who could pass on relevant contact information while still maintaining privacy. Or could the TGA handle something like this? I had and still have no knowledge of TGA or what they are about or do, only what was in the submission guide. TGA's contact details could be given to women who are facing mesh implants so they can do some research before undergoing this procedure.

[redacted]