

13/4/2011

Senate Finance and Public Administration Committees
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

To whom it may concern,

RE: Inquiry into the administration of health practitioner registration by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)

The current situation by which independent midwives are being processed if there has been a complaint against them is unacceptable and unethical. Conditions should not be placed on any midwife before an investigation has taken place.

I am concerned that an independent midwife could find her registration under restriction and this would exclude her from continuing to care for her pregnant clients. This may mean the mothers are unable to homebirth as is their wish.

Whilst I understand that there needs to be a system in place to regulate the competency and safety of all independent midwives I respectfully ask that you allow midwives who have had a complaint registered against them to be allowed to continue assisting at homebirths until the complaint has been investigated properly.

There will always be situations where misconduct of the most serious nature requires immediate intervention but in all other cases I believe that the midwife should be allowed to continue practicing until the investigation is completed.

I have delivered two children in a public hospital with a private obstetrician as was my desire at the time. In the future my daughter may choose to do the same or she may choose to homebirth with the assistance of a trained midwife. While I did not choose this option I will continue to strenuously argue that homebirth should be one of a range of options for pregnant women in Australia.

The safety and well being of the mother and baby are both important. I would never suggest that an incompetent or untrained midwife should be allowed to assist with homebirths but I would like the process to also ensure that the midwives who are registered are allowed to continue practicing until any investigation is completed.

I request that an urgent review of this process takes place immediately so that registered midwives can continue to assist home birthing mothers in Australia.

Sincerely