

FACT SHEET

Poisons Amendment (Midwives) Bill 2010

The Bill amends the *Poisons Act 1971* to enable suitably qualified midwives, referred to as 'eligible midwives', to prescribe certain Schedule 4 (restricted) substances and to also administer certain Schedule 8 (narcotic) substances to their patients in the course of midwifery practice.

An 'eligible midwife' is a midwife whose registration as a midwife is endorsed by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia under section 94 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Tasmania) as being qualified to administer, obtain, possess, sell, supply or prescribe restricted substances; and to administer, obtain or possess narcotic substances.

These amendments are in line with amendments made by the Australian parliament to the *Health Insurance Act 1973* and *National Health Act 1953* which add midwives as a new prescriber group. Eligible midwives will be able to apply to become authorised to prescribe under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme which means that their prescriptions will be eligible for the PBS subsidy.

For the purposes of the Act, the Minister for Health will be able to determine by order which scheduled substances may be prescribed and administered by the eligible midwives.