

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Reproductive, Maternal and Paediatric](#)
Subject: INQUIRY INTO REPRODUCTIVE, MATERNAL AND PAEDIATRIC HEALTH SERVICES IN TASMANIA
Date: Friday, 6 September 2024 10:19:09 PM

Dear Ms Ella Haddad,

I would like to make a submission to the inquiry into reproductive, maternal and paediatric health services in Tasmania.

My submission relates to (i) reproductive health services; (ii) maternal health services; (iii) birth trauma and (v) midwife professional Indemnity Insurance.

The current maternity options available to women in Tasmania are terrifyingly abmissal. Women are pretty much forced through the standard obstetric model, which evidence shows, is not what women want or need.

Women want continuity of care and greater access to midwifery led care. Ideally, through MGP and homebirth programs. Tasmania is now one of the only states in Australia, where there are no publicly funded homebirth programs.

The lack of competition in the maternity market, no doubt increases the risk that women in Tasmania receive disrespectful and coercive maternity care. Because the hospitals or treating obstetricians know that women have nowhere else to go.

In my second pregnancy, I requested to see a different OB and was told bad luck. I have had OB's here in Tassie tell me that my consent does not matter in labour, and that the OB can do whatever they want, as long as they follow some sort of hospital policy. I couldn't believe it. Imagine you walk into a hospital, with the belief that the medical staff there can do whatever they wish to your body, as long as you are in labour. I have also had doctors tell me that I am not allowed to decline tests, or that care will be denied if I refuse to undergo the recommended testing.

This is not only illegally, but absolutely lacking in any sort of woman centred care approach. Providers in Tasmania definitely need informed consent training. I opted for a homebirth in my second pregnancy, as there was absolutely no way that I was about to risk my birth and my well being on an OB's mood for that day.

Midwife Professional Indemnity Insurance

Unfortunately, homebirth options in Tasmania are extremely scarce. There are only two midwives working in my area, and they book out extremely fast. This means that a lot of women that would like a homebirth miss out, and are forced through the hospital system. It is extremely sad that homebirth midwives are not covered by professional indemnity insurance, and it completely under-appreciates the important work that they do.

If private midwives were to have adequate professional indemnity insurance, we may have more midwives wishing to work privately in Tasmania. Not only would this be hugely beneficial for women and their reproductive choices, but it would also take pressure off the hospital system. It is important that any sort of insurance covers all women, and not just those deemed 'low risk'. I am currently pregnant with my third child, and if I cannot access private midwifery care, I will be forced to free birth.

Kind regards,

