

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Reproductive, Maternal and Paediatric](#)
Subject: Submission to the inquiry
Date: Sunday, 15 September 2024 8:30:13 AM

The Select Committee,

To whom it may concern,

I am a mother of three living in North West Tasmania, and felt compelled to share my story for this inquiry. My husband and I moved to NW Tas from Sydney almost 10 years ago - the fresh air, slower pace, natural beauty, and access to a healthier lifestyle drew us south, and we are still so in love with this island and how wonderful it is to raise a family here. We relocated before we had even considered having children, and honestly never really gave it much thought as back in Sydney, we had access to multiple public and private options.

Fast forward a few years and while discussing the idea of starting a family, we're confronted by the reality of a system stretched thin, the Mersey maternity ward closing and our only option being an hour to Launceston or an hour to Burnie. My husband was recounting birth trauma stories being discussed between men at work and I was also hearing so many accounts of the system letting women down again and again, leaving them feeling helpless and traumatized through a chapter in their lives they were so excited to experience.

We were fortunate enough to have access to the only private midwives on the NW coast at this time, and fortunately in a position financially to afford this. Fast forward 7 years and all three of my babies were born in the comfort and safety of our own home, with the same midwives present each time.

I had three different pregnancies, all identified as low risk however not without minor challenges here and there that required monitoring. Our antenatal care was the same as it would be through the public system - I had all of the recommended blood tests, scans, glucose tests and checks with the hospital obstetricians to make sure all was well. I felt seen, supported, respected and genuinely cared for by my midwives and went on to have three spontaneous and natural births with no intervention or the need to transfer. As someone who doesn't identify as being alternative or anti-system in my beliefs, it's important to state that the option to homebirth was never on my radar until I was met with so many birth trauma stories. My experience of pregnancy and birth was beautiful, empowering and everything I could have ever dreamed it could be - to the point that I feel guilty for having had access to a model of care that so many others do not.

Please do not take this model of care away, especially when the hospital system is already struggling to cope with the most basic needs of maternity care. The midwives and doctors work so hard, but they can only do so much. Help the women and maternity care providers of Tasmania by supporting a system that allows women access to a variety of different care options. Allow them a voice in selecting the care that is best for them. The research is clear: women-centered care results in the best pregnancy, birth and postpartum outcomes.

Ashleigh Loubser

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

South Spreyton, Tasmania 7310