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24/06/2016

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NAMBOUR DAY SURGERY
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Enquiry Secretary
HCDSDFVP Committee
Parliament House
BRISBANE QLD 4000
Fax: 3553 6639

Dear Sir Sir/Madam

DON'T BLAME AND SHAME WOMEN FOR UNINTENDED PREGNANCIES

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a comment/submission to the enquiry into the aspects of the law governing termination of pregnancy in Queensland. My name is Dawn Wallace and I am the director of the East Coast Womens Centre. This centre provides a safe and non-judgmental service to women whom are seeking a termination of pregnancy for various reasons. We receive many phone calls regarding the law of terminations in QLD and whether a termination is illegal and what ramifications will occur if they have a termination. We believe a woman should have the right to choose whether they continue with an unintended pregnancy or terminate without the threat of ramifications of being prosecuted.

I believe the current policy of termination being illegal but not prosecutable is behind the times and in modern day society where there are so many unwanted children. A woman should be given the choice of choosing to terminate without the fear of prosecution.

There should be no legal principals involved when a woman has to make this very difficult decision and therefore request that the law be changed. I do believe the women should be well cared for in facilities which are governed by Queensland Health Law and comply and are accredited for all Australian Standards.

I do not believe terminations should be regulated to the term of gestation however I do believe every precaution should be taken to ensure the safety and well-being of the woman.

A recent article states “pregnancies that are mistimed, unwanted and are common in Australia. 1. Up to 1/3 of pregnancies are unintended. A National Survey of women in Australia aged between 18-51 showed unintended pregnancies appear to have increased over time, despite more reliable contraceptives becoming available.

For 35 years I have worked to support women in their choices to terminate their pregnancy (s). Never once have I found a woman who has not found this to be the most difficult decision she has ever had to make. The current law in Queensland just adds more anxiety to their decision.

We provide a full counselling service to our women both pre-procedure and post-operatively if they require as well as a 24 hour hotline.

As a Director of East Coast Womens Centre I believe there is an urgent need to modernise and clarify the law to reflect current community attitudes and expectations.

Yours sincerely

Dawn Wallace
Director

1. Queensland Womens Health Network News, Issue #1 2016