

## Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2023

**Submission No:** 36

**Submitted by:** The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG)

**Publication:** Making the submission and your name public

**Attachments:** See attachment

**Submitter Comments:**

15 January 2024

Health and Environment Committee  
Queensland Parliamentary Service  
Parliament House  
Cnr George and Alice Streets  
Brisbane  
QLD 4000

Dear Health and Environment Committee,

**Re: Inquiry into the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2023**

Thank you for identifying the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG; the College) as a stakeholder for the Health and Environment Committee's inquiry into the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2023. The College writes to express its support for the amendments outlined in the proposed bills, specifically the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*, the *Termination of Pregnancy Act 2018* and Criminal Code.

As detailed in the College's previous submissions relating to the proposed amendments to the *Termination of Pregnancy Act 2018* and Criminal Code, RANZCOG strongly advocates for the need for improved access to abortion services in Queensland. The College is in support of allowing additional health practitioners to perform early medical terminations of pregnancy through the use of termination drugs as this amendment aligns with our commitment to advocate for equitable access to necessary healthcare services and support when making reproductive choices.

Additionally, RANZCOG advocates for the use of inclusive language, recognising the diversity of cultural perspectives. While RANZCOG supports the use of non-gendered language, it also emphasises the importance of using the term "women/woman" alongside it. It is important to acknowledge that certain cultures identify with this term, and the College believes it should not be discredited. The College acknowledges the legislative complexities surrounding the use of both inclusive language and the term 'women,' but advocates for an approach that respects and includes all sections of the community, without neglecting the needs and identities of any group.

The College believes that a comprehensive approach is essential to ensuring that everyone feels seen and considered in matters related to reproductive healthcare.

In addition to RANZCOG's support for the amendments to the *Termination of Pregnancy Act* and Criminal Code, it endorses the proposed amendments to the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*. Recognising a newborn baby in the clinical workload and subsequently increasing staff numbers is a positive step that will benefit women and enhance support during the postnatal period. The College expects that this change will contribute to improved funding for midwifery staffing and acknowledge their vital role in caring not only for the woman but also for her newborn baby.

Lastly, RANZCOG strongly supports the idea of sharing key findings, recommendations and lessons learnt from serious clinical incidents with relevant staff. This proactive approach is crucial in preventing adverse outcomes from recurring, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and patient safety.

Thank you for your attention to these matters, and RANZCOG trusts that our collective efforts will contribute to positive changes in healthcare legislation.

The College would like to acknowledge, with thanks Dr Kathryn Saba and Dr Samantha Scherman for their contribution to this submission.

Should you wish to discuss the above feedback, I can be contacted via email at [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Dr Gillian Gibson  
**President**

Cc Tamzyn West, Policy Officer, RANZCOG [REDACTED]