



Hon Steven Miles MP
Minister for Health and
Minister for Ambulance Services

1 William Street Brisbane Qld 4000
GPO Box 48 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3035 6100
Facsimile +61 7 3220 6231

11 JUN 2019

Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Service
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I write in response to your letter regarding petition number 3089-19, tabled in Parliament on 11 June 2019, in relation to the Termination of Pregnancy Act 2018 (the Act).

The passing of the Act in October 2018 means that women in Queensland are now able to access appropriate health services for abortion should they choose to, affirming the rights and autonomy of women. The purpose of the Act is to enable reasonable and safe access for women to termination of pregnancy and to regulate the conduct of registered health practitioners in relation to terminations. Key aspects of the Act include:

- medical practitioners may perform a lawful termination on a woman upon request, up to a gestational limit of 22 weeks;
- after 22 weeks, a lawful termination can be performed if at least two medical practitioners agree that the termination is appropriate in all the circumstances;
- registered health practitioners are required to inform a person in certain circumstances of their conscientious objection to termination of pregnancy, and to refer or transfer the care of a woman who seeks advice or treatment about a termination; and
- safe access zones have been established around premises where terminations are performed to prevent harassment and intimidation of people as they enter.

The Act ensures termination of pregnancy is treated as a health issue rather than a criminal issue. The Act also provides clarity and safety for health practitioners providing terminations of pregnancy and it brings Queensland Legislation in line with other Australian jurisdictions.

The guidelines outline several aspects health professionals are required to take into consideration when providing termination of pregnancy services to women in Queensland. These include consent requirements, psychological support, pre-termination assessment and other considerations, and post-termination care.

Further to the legislative change, Queensland Health partners with True Relationships and Reproductive Health and Women's Health Queensland for the provision of expert advice, education and support relating to reproductive and sexual health care.

Both organisations support services for women covering contraception; planning a pregnancy; antenatal care; postnatal care; menstrual concerns; cervical screening; menopause; sexual health, colposcopy and domestic and family violence. These services support a broader continuum of care for all women in Queensland.

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SM', with a stylized flourish at the end.

STEVEN MILES MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services