



Australian Summit on Abortion Law Reform

Saturday 17th March 2018

Queensland Parliament House

Registrations from 8:30am

Brought to you by WOMBS International

Presenting an informed dialogue toward:

'The Case for Care'

A 360 degree look at abortion law, policies and practices in Australia, seeking ways forward to inform and equip legislators and our community.

An event promoting a new dialogue on how to best support women experiencing crisis pregnancy today alongside specialist service providers, medicos, social workers, psychologists, lawyers, MPs and women with lived experience.

We would like to take the chance to thank all who are participating in this inaugural occasion and look forward to working with each and every one of you for the best policies, protocols, procedures and legislative results for our community.



Times & Topics

First Morning Session

9am – Welcome & Overview

Tiana Legge, Researcher & Mediator (Director WOMBS International)

9:10 – How do women in Australia experience choice today?

Catherine Toomey – Advocate & Bioethicist, joined by panel of women who've experienced unexpected pregnancy or abortion first hand.

9:40 – Legal Context for Abortion Law Reform in Australia

Anna Walsh, Specialist in medical law will review current abortion laws across Australian states and consider the consequences of legislative change on society.

9:55 – Reflection piece & Break for Morning Tea

10:25 – 'Options Counselling' and Beyond

Specialist panel of psychotherapists & counsellors presenting the case for an integrated model of care based on observational research and standards of practice in the pre-decision phase.

The segment will also showcase some of the support that is available across Australia. With Gaye James, Cristy Mock, Juliet Ballinger, Stacy Allen, Jennifer Gurry and Cathy Marzahn.

11:10 – Regional Access to Termination & Pregnancy Support

Dr Alexandra Doig has been a registrar in regional areas of QLD.

11:20 – OB/GYN Panel of experts

Dr Leah Torres – OB/GYN and provider of terminations from Utah, the USA on local laws and the impact on her practice.

Dr Bryan Kenny – Brisbane OB/GYN shares clinical concerns around legislative change.

Mid-Morning Session

11:45 – Prenatal testing and abnormal screenings

Joelle Kelly, T21 Advocate on the pressures and protocols related to prenatal screenings.

12:00 – What about Post-Abortive Care?

Anne Lastman, clinical counsellor and specialist researcher in this field will look at why some women regret their terminations; abortion as a risk factor for mental health problems and will consider any regulative changes which might be necessary to ensure women receive the care they need.

This talk will be followed by a brief review of post abortive support programs in Australia hearing from representatives of those service providers.

12:30 – Lunch Break on the Roof with a View & live music provided by Natalie De Jager

13:15 – Select a Concurrent Session:

Session A: 'Exploring the Options'

A discussion around the presentation of and access to various alternatives when experiencing complicated pregnancy - as presented by specialists in social work, case management, adoption, fostering, parental responsibility transfers, parenting support programs and more. Facilitated by the Hon Margaret Keech.

Session B: 'Medical Matters'

Especially for medical practitioners interested in and impacted by abortion legislation – whether GP's, Registered nurses, midwives, OB/GYN's, et al. It will examine themes such as improving the clinical response to complicated pregnancies; best referral protocols; conscientious objection and more.

14:15pm – Policy Development Stations

Mini 'round tables' seeking to brainstorm an area of concern and develop a few recommendations for policy. *See next page for list of tables & topics.*

After lunch 'Split-Sessions'

Afternoon Sessions

Policy Round Tables

This segment of the day is a place when all the collective minds and experience of participants can come together to work on making recommendations for improving care for women toward real reform.

Particular focus will be on addressing the needs of women today in unplanned or problematic pregnancies and also consider other community members impacted. Each table has a facilitator who is a specialist in the topic assigned to be discussed. We will consider, 'Would effective change be brought about by changes in law, regulations, health or social services, or a combination?

We encourage each table to come up with two or three questions or comments which can be worked into potential policy recommendations for legislators to consider in each state.

TOPIC	FACILITATOR	TABLE #
Informed Consent	Frances Beaumont – Healthcare Ethicist	1
Abortion Coercion & Domestic Violence	Julie Robinson – MA Social Work	2
Maternal Support vs. Isolation	Caroline McCormack – Founder, The Mother Effect	3
Data Collection & Clinical Practice Auditing	Tiana Legge – Researcher, Dir WOMBS Intl.	4
Medical Support Options (ensuring 2 nd opinions to RU486 Reversal & more)	Women's Health Specialists	5
Paternal Rights & Responsibilities	Lawyers	6
Abnormal Screenings/ Prenatal testing	Joelle Kelly – Disability advocate	7
Pre-Decision Support Protocols	Gaye James – Counsellor & Social Worker	8
Post Abortion Protocols	Anne Lastman – Clinical counsellor	9
Bubble Zones	Anna Walsh – Medical Lawyer	10

3:15 – Round table round-up

A review of some recommended outcomes with a special focus on two key shared areas of interest based on participant polling: *Informed Consent* and *Data Collection*.

4:00 – Concluding Questions & Comments

[Includes an open platform for any MP comments or observations with special consideration around the question - Is abortion reform a legislative issue or is it about regulatory, policy and social changes?]

4:30 – Close

5:30 – Drinks on the Brisbane River

We invite our participants* from the Summit to walk down the road, past or through the beautiful Botanic Gardens to meet us in the Garden of **The Stamford Plaza on the Brisbane River**.

This is an opportunity to both continue conversations and networking, as well as to unwind after an intensive day.

Here we will be serenaded by the wonderful **Warwick Adeney, Concertmaster of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra** and his daughter, Eleanor. A raffle will be drawn with some stunning prizes. Proceeds from the profits will go toward organisations bettering the direct support for and advocacy of women experiencing complicated pregnancies.

**This event is open to those not participating in the Summit day schedule as well.*

In Closing...



