



Hon Lawrence Springborg MP  
Minister for Health

Mr Neil Laurie  
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Dear Mr Laurie

I write in response to your letter regarding petition number 1916-12, tabled in Parliament on 27 November 2012, in relation to the treatment provided to pregnant women and unborn babies.

It is a matter of fact that the birth outcomes for women and babies in Australia are amongst the safest in the world.

Pregnant women and newborn babies in Queensland have access to an extensive range of health care services provided locally. I have personally advocated for rural birthing services to be reinitiated where required by communities and safe to do so.

Queensland Health supports and maintains a flying obstetrician and gynaecologist service to support safe medical care to remote and rural areas when medical intervention is required.

Queensland has the highest number of eligible midwives in Australia reflecting the commitment from Queensland Health to provide pregnant women with choice in relation to their lead maternity carer by having midwives who can provide continuity of care.

Queensland has led the development of providing access to public health facilities by privately practicing midwives, another example where women in Queensland have access to services and care that is not currently supported in other States.

From January 2013, families will have access to postnatal care provided by Queensland Health at two and four weeks, which are in addition to the current postnatal services provided through the public health system.

In summary, the information I have provided details a State wide approach in Queensland, led by Queensland Health which is currently providing a comprehensive and safe service to pregnant women and babies. With the extensive work which is currently ongoing, Queensland is at the forefront of providing continuity of carer services, access to privately practicing midwives and supporting the revitalisation of rural and remote maternity service options.

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

**LAWRENCE SPRINGBORG MP**  
**Minister for Health**

17 DEC 2012