

From: Sarah ORourke
To: Martin Philip; Lucy Collier
Cc: news
Subject: FW: Media inquiry: George Christensen abortion bill
Date: Monday, 22 February 2021 4:54:58 PM

DOH RTI 1824/21

Hi Marty and Lucy,

Please see below a draft response and enquiry from The Merc that is due tomorrow.

Hoges is yet to discuss with the DG and then will be in touch.

In the meantime, let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Sarah

Please attribute to a Queensland Health spokesperson:

A live birth following a termination of pregnancy is not a botched abortion, and any suggestion of that is insensitive and cruel.

Deciding to end a pregnancy is a personal decision, which can be made for a range of reasons.

Whatever your circumstances, a healthcare provider or counselling service, and sometimes your GP, can provide you with information and advice to help you understand your rights and the options available to you, including the types of procedure, cost, and services near you.

Background – not for attribution:

Signs of life following a termination of pregnancy does not mean the termination was unsuccessful.

There were no amendments to the *Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003* as a result of the *Termination of Pregnancy Act 2018 (the Act)* being introduced on 3 December 2018. This means that the birth of any baby born in Queensland, which includes a stillborn child, must be registered as a 'birth' under the Act. It also means that the delivery of a foetus, after a termination of pregnancy with any signs of life, must have the birth registered as well as the death.

The Queensland Clinical Guideline for termination of pregnancy follows the Australian Government's definition of a live birth and outlines sign of life to include: beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, breath efforts, definite movement of the voluntary muscles, any other evidence of life.

For more information and details on cost, or to find a service near you, please visit our website here: <https://www.qld.gov.au/health/children/pregnancy/termination-of-pregnancy>

Queensland Clinical guidelines can be found on our website here:
<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/qcg>

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ENDS

From: news <news@health.qld.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2021 11:52 AM
To: Sarah ORourke <Sarah.ORourke2@health.qld.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Media inquiry: George Christensen abortion bill

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@news.com.au>
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2021 11:29 AM
To: news <news@health.qld.gov.au>
Subject: Media inquiry: George Christensen abortion bill

Good morning,

I am reaching out to get Qld Health's response to George Christensen's Children Born Alive Protection Bill. More details here: <https://www.georgechristensen.com.au/bornalive>

The below is information Mr Christensen has published about the proposed bill.

QUEENSLAND HEALTH'S CLINICAL GUIDELINES FOR ABORTION STATE:

'IF [DURING AN ABORTION] A LIVE BIRTH OCCURS... DO NOT PROVIDE LIFE SUSTAINING TREATMENT... DOCUMENT THE TIME AND DATE OF DEATH. IN 2016 IN VICTORIA, 33 OUT OF THE 310 BABIES ABORTED AFTER 20 WEEKS GESTATION WERE BORN ALIVE.

ALSO IN VICTORIA, BABIES BORN ALIVE DURING LATE-TERM ABORTIONS, THAT SUBSEQUENTLY DIE, ARE RECORDED AS NEONATAL DEATHS, NOT ABORTED BABIES.

BETWEEN 2005 AND 2015, 204 BABIES WERE BORN ALIVE AS A RESULT OF BOTCHED ABORTIONS IN QUEENSLAND.

My questions:

1) In Queensland, what procedures are meant to be followed if a live birth occurs?

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2) How often would a live birth during an abortion occur in Queensland? (Any statistics you can provide would be helpful).

3) Is it true that between 2005 and 2015, 204 babies were born alive as a result of botched abortions in Queensland?

4) Do you have a response to any of the above?

My deadline for comment is 3.30pm.

Thank you,

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Journalist



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From: Sarah ORourke
Sent: 5 March 2021 10:55
To: martin.philip@ministerial.qld.gov.au; Lucy Collier
Cc: news
Subject: FW: Termination of pregnancy response

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hi team,

Please see below our updated response to [REDACTED] on ToP data.

The only data we were unable to get an update on is the number of certified prescribers as that data is held by Marie Stopes Aus.

Let me know if you have any concerns? I'm hoping to send this back to [REDACTED] by 2pm.

Thanks,
Sarah

Please attribute the following to a Queensland Health spokesperson:

Queensland Health is exploring ways to improve access to termination of pregnancy services for women in country Queensland.

Two years after passing the *Termination of Pregnancy Act 2018*, we're focusing on ensuring women in rural and remote communities know what their legal rights are, what is involved if they choose termination, and how to access services.

Many of our 16 Hospital and Health Services have referral pathways in place and are looking at alternative ways of delivering services, including by telehealth and by establishing partnerships with private providers, like Marie Stopes Australia.

This includes more than \$413,000 in grant funding that was provided to Marie Stopes International last year as part of the COVID-19 Immediate Support Measure grants. This additional funding will mean continuity of care for communities in Central Queensland, Rockhampton and Townsville.

This is in addition to the \$1.65 million Service Agreement in place with Marie Stopes International over the 1 January 2020 to 21 December 2022 period.

We met with consumer representatives, clinicians, service providers and government executives in Brisbane to discuss access issues and develop solutions.

Priority access is being given to women with complex needs, women who are marginalised because of discrimination and disadvantage, young women and women with a health care card and no financial means for a private provider option.

Financial assistance may also be available through the PTSS for women who need to travel for services not available locally.

Prior to the enactment of the legislation, there were 212 certified prescribers of MS-2 Step, a medical abortion medication, in Queensland. There are now 410 certified prescribers.

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Background – not for attribution:

- The Department of Health has a Service Agreement with Marie Stopes International (Marie Stopes) to provide \$1.65 million for financial support over the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2022. The Department had a previous Service Agreement with Marie Stopes for funding of \$1.65 million for the term 1 December 2016 to 31 December 2019. The funding is provided for lease and travel costs to support the continued operation of Marie Stopes's clinics in Rockhampton and Townsville. The total cumulative value over the 6-year period is \$3.3 million (excluding GST).
- Marie Stopes also received one-off, time-limited funding totalling \$413,267 (excluding GST) in 2019-2020 under the COVID-19 Immediate Support Measures grants for:
 - \$297,000 (ex GST) for the term 4 June 2020 to 30 June 2021 for support to enable continuity of care for communities in Central Queensland, including management of waitlist clinics and transport and accommodation of Marie Stopes nurses and doctors to and from Rockhampton and Townsville clinics.
 - \$116,267 (ex GST) for the term 24 April 2020 to 31 July 2020 for:
 - \$28,267 (ex GST) for list management support to support intrastate travel of doctors, nurses and clients across Queensland,
 - \$88,000 for transportation and accommodation of nurses and doctors to and from Rockhampton and Townsville clinics.

ENDS

Summary of data

- 9308 terminations of pregnancy performed in 2018 and 9496 in 2019 (NB: admitted patient data only – we don't have non-admitted data)
- In 2019, 9% performed in public hospital sector and 91% in private.
- To date the numbers in the hospital setting have decreased between 2011 to 2019. However, there has been a slight increase in 2019 compared to 2018.

Abortions by Year and Mother's Age for Admitted Patients in Public and Private Sector, Queensland 2013 to 2017 calendar years

Calendar Year	Mother's age group						Total
	19 and under	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40+	
2013	1,581	3,363	2,794	2,082	1,471	730	12,021
2014	1,294	3,143	2,723	2,091	1,375	659	11,285
2015	1,157	2,992	2,644	2,054	1,304	662	10,813
2016	970	2,658	2,693	2,066	1,397	636	10,420
2017	819	2,381	2,440	1,961	1,319	525	9,445
2018	748	2,315	2,416	1,980	1,323	526	9,308
2019p.	780	2,332	2,447	2,034	1,347	556	9,496

*This data is preliminary and subject to change. The data excludes events where termination is managed in primary care, and the mother is not admitted to a hospital.

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Data from the Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection shows the number of terminations that were performed in Queensland public hospitals and licensed private health facilities. However, the data does not include terminations performed in an outpatient setting, or medical terminations carried out by general practitioners in private practice.

Calls to 13 HEALTH

Between 1/01/2020 and 31/12/2020 13 HEALTH received:

- 38 calls regarding the Termination of Pregnancy Act 2018
- 107 triage nurse calls (triage nurse calls are calls where reason for call indicates the caller is seeking information on a prospective termination)
- 258 post termination triage nurse calls.

Website activity (Clinical Excellence Queensland – for health professionals)

- More than 19,700 page views
- More than 14,600 unique page views
- More than 8,600 downloads

From: [REDACTED]@news.com.au>

Sent: Monday, 22 February 2021 10:44 AM

To: news <news@health.qld.gov.au>

Subject: Re: Termination of pregnancy

Hi,

I would like to do a follow up on this issue, (which I had been all set to do early last year ut then COVID happened and I've only just remembered that I haven't done it yet).

Being that the data is now a year old, I would like to request the latest data, and an update to how efforts went on improving access to termination of pregnancy services for women in country Queensland.

What work has the state done with Marie Stopes Australia?

Also, is there any data available anywhere yet on terminations performed in outpatient settings, like GPs prescribing medication?

I understand this may take a week or so. Please give me a call to discuss anything.

Kind regards,



Courier Mail Sunday Mail



On Wed, 11 Dec 2019 at 12:46, news <news@health.qld.gov.au> wrote:

Hi [REDACTED]

I understand you were after some info on terminations of pregnancy in Qld. Please find statement and info below –

Please attribute the following to a Queensland Health spokesperson:

Queensland Health is exploring ways to improve access to **termination of pregnancy** services for women in country Queensland.

Twelve months after passing the *Termination of Pregnancy Act 2018*, we're focusing on ensuring women in rural and remote communities know what their legal rights are, what is involved if they choose termination, and how to access services.

Many of our 16 Hospital and Health Services have referral pathways in place and are looking at alternative ways of delivering services, including by telehealth and by establishing partnerships with private providers, like Marie Stopes Australia.

Earlier this month, we met with consumer representatives, clinicians, service providers and government executives in Brisbane to discuss access issues and develop solutions.

Priority access is being given to women with complex needs, women who are marginalised because of discrimination and disadvantage, young women and women with a health care card and no financial means for a private provider option.

Financial assistance may also be available through the PTSS for women who need to travel for services not available locally.

Prior to the enactment of the legislation, there were 212 certified prescribers of MS-2 Step, a medical abortion medication, in Queensland. There are now 410 certified prescribers.

DOH RTI 1824/21

Summary of data

- 9303 terminations of pregnancy performed in 2018 (NB: admitted patient data only – we don't have non-admitted data)
- 6% performed in public hospital sector
- 94% performed in private hospital sector
- To date the numbers in the hospital setting appear to be decreasing (2015 to 2018)

Data from the Queensland Hospital Admitted Patient Data Collection shows the number of terminations that were performed in Queensland public hospitals and licensed private health facilities. However, the data does not include terminations performed in an outpatient setting, such as medical terminations carried out by general practitioners in private practice.

Abortions by Year and Mother's Age for Admitted Patients in Public and Private Sector, Queensland 2013 to 2017 calendar years

Year	Mother's Age						Total
	19 and under	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40+	
2013	1,581	3,363	2,794	2,082	1,471	730	12,021
2014	1,294	3,143	2,723	2,091	1,375	659	11,285
2015	1,157	2,992	2,644	2,054	1,304	662	10,813
2016	970	2,658	2,693	2,066	1,397	636	10,420
2017	819	2,381	2,442	1,961	1,319	525	9,447
2018	747	2,313	2,416	1,980	1,321	526	9,303

This data is preliminary and subject to change. The data excludes events where termination is managed in primary care, and the mother is not admitted to a hospital.

Calls to 13 HEALTH

Between 1/01/2019 and 31/10/2019 13 HEALTH received:

- 21 calls regarding the Termination of Pregnancy Act 2018
- 88 triage nurse calls (triage nurse calls are calls where reason for call indicates the caller is seeking information on a prospective termination)

- 169 post termination triage nurse calls.

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Website activity (Clinical Excellence Queensland – for health professionals)

- 17,611 page views
- 12,716 unique page views
- 8,691 downloads

Most of this activity was in the month or so after the Act came into effect and people were mainly downloading information about the legislation.

Thanks,

Laura (for Damo)

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RTI RELEASE

From: [news](#)
To: [REDACTED]; [Martin Philip](#)
Cc: [news](#)
Subject: RE:
Date: Wednesday, 10 March 2021 12:39:17 PM

DOH RTI 1824/21

Hi [REDACTED]

No, we don't have data for 2020 at this time.

Thanks,
Sarah

From: [REDACTED]@brisbanetimes.com.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 10 March 2021 11:22 AM
To: news <news@health.qld.gov.au>; Martin Philip <martin.philip@ministerial.qld.gov.au>
Subject:

Morning,

Health Minister was asked about the number of terminations in Parliament this morning.

She gave data for 2013-19.

Is there data for the total number of terminations in 2020?

Deadline: ASAP

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[REDACTED] r
Brisbane Times



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From: [news](#)
To: martin.philip@ministerial.qld.gov.au; [Lucy Collier](#)
Subject: RE: Media inquiry: Abortion statistics
Date: Wednesday, 10 March 2021 3:19:00 PM

DOH RTI 1824/21

Hey guys,

FYI – the latest data available is 2019.

This is what we're advising journos.

Cheers,

Kat

From: [REDACTED]@news.com.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 10 March 2021 2:59 PM
To: news <news@health.qld.gov.au>
Subject: Media inquiry: Abortion statistics

Hello all, I hope you're well.

Health Minister Yvette D'ath today revealed in Parliament the number of pregnancy terminations in 2019, but she did not reveal how many had occurred last year.

Her office has referred me to Qld Health.

How many pregnancy terminations occurred in 2020?

A response by 4.30pm if possible is appreciated.

Kind regards, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Journalist



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