



Australian College of  
**Midwives**

ACM: For midwives. With women. For the future.

# POSITION STATEMENT

For Womens Reproductive Rights

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## The Australian College of Midwives' Position Statement for Women's reproductive rights

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The Australian College of Midwives (ACM) supports a woman's right to bodily autonomy and to access legal, safe, timely and compassionate abortion care as an essential health service. ACM condemns the repealing of abortion care law *Roe v Wade* in the United States which threatens access to legal termination of pregnancy. In Australia, abortion care is decriminalised and sits within healthcare legislation. This ensures that abortion care is regarded as a universally accessible healthcare service and women have access to care that is timely, affordable, and accessible based on their own personal choices.

The International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), of which ACM is a member association, espouses in their '[Philosophy of Midwifery Care](#)'<sup>1</sup> that '*midwifery care promotes, protects and supports women's human, reproductive and sexual health and rights... It is based on the ethical principles of justice, equity, and respect for human dignity*' and '*midwifery care takes place in partnership with women, recognising the right to self-determination, and is respectful, personalised, continuous and non-authoritarian*'.

Additionally, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, Target 5.6 (*Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights*)<sup>2</sup>, recognise that midwives are experts in sexual and reproductive health care and uphold women's ability to make decisions about their own reproductive health. This target is pivotal to gender equality and underpins universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights<sup>3</sup>.

ACM's [Professional Philosophy](#)<sup>4</sup> statement confirms the role of midwives to protect and enhance the health and social status of women and strongly supports:

- Access to legal, safe, timely and compassionate abortion care as an essential health service for all women;
- A woman's right to bodily autonomy and self-determination over her reproductive health including whether to have a baby or not; and
- A woman's right to access evidence-based information to make an informed decision regarding her choice to have a baby or not.

## References

1. International Confederation of Midwives (ICM). 2014. The philosophy and model of midwifery care. [<http://www.internationalmidwives.org/2012/04/22/ThePhilosophyandModelofMidwiferyCare.2011.pdf>].
2. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). 2020. Women's ability to decide. [[https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/20-033\\_SDG561-IssueBrief-v4.1.pdf](https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/20-033_SDG561-IssueBrief-v4.1.pdf)].
3. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). 2020. Working paper: Linking women's economic empowerment, eliminating gender based violence and enabling sexual and reproductive health rights. [[https://www.care.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/201202\\_UNFPA-CARE\\_Linking-womens-economic-empowerment-final-1.pdf](https://www.care.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/201202_UNFPA-CARE_Linking-womens-economic-empowerment-final-1.pdf)].