

MEDIA RELEASE

**DOCTORS, NURSES, SOCIAL WORKERS AND MP'S REFLECT
ON 1 YEAR SINCE ABORTION DECRIMINALISED IN QLD**

On December 3 2019, one year since abortion was decriminalised in Queensland, Children by Choice held a Symposium at Parliament House in Queensland. The event was hosted by The Honourable Di Farmer, Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence.

This event marked one year since the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018 was enacted and all Hospital and Health Services in the state were given a directive to provide abortion care or have in place an effective pathway for the medical service. Speakers at the event reflected on the year from legal, social, practical and community experiences. Attendees included MP's who voted on the Bill along with frontline workers in the healthcare and community sector.

The Honourable Di Farmer, Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence said decriminalisation of abortion was about making sure women had the power to make decisions about their own bodies.

“One of my proudest moments as the Queensland Government’s Minister for Women was to see this legislation passed one year ago,” she said.

“Access to appropriate medical services is a fundamental human right, and decriminalising abortion values the lives of women, and trusts them to make decisions about their own health.”

“This is an important milestone to celebrate – and as a government, we will continue relentlessly to pursue gender equality in this state.”

Jane Hancock CEO of Central West Hospital and Health Service stated that “The removal of the threat of prosecution and conviction provides the clarity required to drive change and improvements to service within our healthcare system.”

“It is not just law, we are actually changing our practice to increase accessibility to termination of pregnancy services in Queensland,” she said.

Sian Tooker, Senior Counsellor at Children by Choice presented the lived experience of Queensland women and pregnant people post decriminalisation. Recognising that “Children

by Choice clients seeking abortion are diverse and represent a range of ages, ethnicities and locations across the state, they may be experiencing violence, have a disability, complex mental health issues and/or strong religious faith." said Ms Tooker.

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Children by Choice is an independent Brisbane-based non-profit organisation, committed to providing unbiased information, counselling and referrals for all unplanned pregnancy options – abortion, adoption and parenting. We also provide sexuality education to young people and professional development training for health and community sector professionals. Founded almost 50 years ago, we work to advance Queenslanders' reproductive choices, and to improve equitable access to abortion.

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