

## **NATIONAL CONFERENCE CALLS FOR EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ABORTION ACROSS AUSTRALIA WHILE KEEPING VENUE UNDER WRAPS**

“Abortion is a legal, common and very safe health care procedure in Queensland, yet the venue for the Unplanned Pregnancy and Abortion Conference had to be kept under wraps”.

“The Children by Choice Conference is bringing over 60 speakers and 250 delegates to Brisbane on the 1 and 2 August and the location for the event is given only when participants are screened”.

“This is the fifth conference held by Children by Choice and all previous events have attracted anti-choice harrasers with offensive signage outside the venue, we expect anti-choice behaviour to be heightened while NSW debates their abortion laws ” says Holly Brennan OAM, Manager of Children by Choice.

One in four women have an abortion in their lifetime.

“They are the women in our lives. Ourselves, our sisters, daughters, mothers, friends and colleagues. Many Australians do not even realise that abortion is still illegal in some Australian states. In most states and territories across Australia we trust pregnant people in their decision making and we know professionals need to come together to look at the latest research and best practice in the field”.

Bonney Corbin, President of Children by Choice says “Our conference is an opportunity for health and community professionals working in and those interested in the fields of unplanned pregnancy, reproductive health and abortion provision to advance their skills and expertise. The conference is two days of experts coming together to share experiences and discuss national and local responses”.

Keynote speakers from Australia include Dr Philip Goldstone, Professor Bruce Shadbolt, Dr Catriona Melville discussing what women want from abortion care and Professor Danielle Mazza talking outcomes in reproductive health. International speakers include Dr Carol Shand, Dame Margret Sparrow from New Zealand and Caitlin Gerdts from the USA (via video conference). Jan Fran and Gina Rushton will speak to the issue of Abortion in the media. Topics including Reproductive Coercion and Domestic and Family Violence, Health Pathways across regional, rural and remote communities, unplanned pregnancy counselling, and improving access and uptake of contraception will also be featured over the two days. Happenings can be followed online using the hashtag #ChildrenXChoice2019.

For the full program and speaker details: <https://www.childrenbychoice.org.au/forprofessionals/2019-conference>

*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.*

**Holly Brennan is available for media comment. Interviews with selected speakers also possible.**

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