



# NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

General Secretary: Brett Holmes | Assistant General Secretary: Judith Kiejda  
P (02) 8595 1234 | [www.facebook.com/nswnma](https://www.facebook.com/nswnma) | [twitter.com/nswnma](https://twitter.com/nswnma)

1 August, 2019

## NSW must support women's rights to safe care

The NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) has joined a chorus of health organisations and legal groups calling on all NSW parliamentarians to support abortion law reform.

NSWNMA Acting General Secretary, Judith Kiejda, said it was imperative the private members bill, introduced today by Sydney MP Alex Greenwich, passed the parliament without any further delay.

"It is unconscionable that in 2019 NSW is the only Australian state or territory yet to legalise abortion," said Ms Kiejda.

"The current law is unjust. It not only violates women's reproductive rights and infringes on their autonomy, it also places an unfair burden on both the patient and their chosen health provider.

"We believe in the rights of patients to determine their own health choices and we certainly believe women should be empowered to decide medical issues regarding their own bodies.

"Any woman who makes this choice should not be unnecessarily punished or impeded by our laws or health system. They should be afforded equal access to safe, high quality health care.

"The proposed *Reproductive Health Care Reform Bill 2019* would help facilitate consistency with contemporary clinical standards. Importantly, this bill ensures health practitioners with a conscientious objection must refer a patient on, enabling her to receive the appropriate care.

"Abortion is a health procedure and our legislation must be brought into the 21st century to ensure it is appropriately regulated as such. It should not be a criminal issue, owing to a law that was enacted more than 100 years ago.

"We acknowledge abortion remains a divisive issue, but as advocates for patient safety we cannot ignore the principles of choice, rights and dignity of people. The majority of community members share this view.

"We call on all members of the NSW Parliament to recognise the international human rights obligations at stake and support this bill."

The NSWNMA is member of the Women's Electoral Lobby, supporting the NSW Pro-Choice Alliance campaign.

---

### **MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Judith Kiejda, Acting General Secretary, NSWNMA 0414 674 119

Gia Hayne, Media Advisor, NSWNMA 0488 015 317