



FAMILY PLANNING VICTORIA

POSITION STATEMENT

ABORTION

Family Planning Victoria recognises that abortion engenders strong political, legal, medical, social, religious, moral and personal responses.

Family Planning Victoria believes that abortion should be legal, safe and accessible to all women for the reasons of -

HEALTH: to safeguard women's health, and to reduce mortality and morbidity as a result of unsafe and illegal abortion.

CHOICE: to ensure that women have the information needed to exercise self-determination, sexual and reproductive freedom and sexual equality.

RIGHTS: to protect women's basic human rights and ensure that these rights are not legally impaired or compromised and that they have access to confidential counselling and services to regulate their fertility.

Family Planning Victoria believes that –

- Safe legal abortion is an essential component of effective sexual and reproductive health services
- Abortion services should be integrated into public health services. It is the responsibility of health service institutions to provide abortion within the terms of existing state legislation
- The prevention of unintended pregnancy is of primary importance for women's health and safe contraceptive methods should be actively promoted to minimise the number of abortions in Australia.
- Abortion should be removed from the criminal codes of all Australian jurisdictions

- The quality and confidentiality of abortion services must be guaranteed, and the rights of the client respected
- Where a health care provider has a legitimate conscientious objection to abortion they must provide non-judgemental, non-coercive counselling and objective referral
- Included in training of all medical, nursing and counselling staff should be opportunities to consider personal value systems and exploration of differing values.

Family Planning Victoria will -

- Advocate for the decriminalisation of abortion and actively promote freedom of choice for women.
- Advocate for the provision of safe affordable medical and surgical abortion methods and a range of choices through consultation and liaison with government, medical services and other agencies
- Promote the dissemination of accurate information relating to abortion and other methods of fertility regulation
- Support and promote the provision of the range of services related to unplanned pregnancy delivered by the family planning organizations
- Advocate for the development and provision of appropriate and responsive training programs for service providers
- Collaborate with other like-minded agencies in the field in fulfilling the above objectives
- Support the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) statement on abortion which commits member organizations to work for the elimination of unsafe abortion and for increasing the right of access to safe legal abortion for all women.