



## *A suitable legislative framework for termination of pregnancy in South Australia*

### Fact Sheet 3 - Terminology

The following list of definitions may help with the terminology used throughout this project and in the other Fact Sheets. SALRI is aware that the use of terminology in the context of abortion is a sensitive issue and that some parties may disagree with some of these terms and definitions.<sup>1</sup>

**Abortion** A medical procedure to end a pregnancy, either through the use of medication or surgery, to remove the embryo or foetus and placenta from the uterus. See also Termination of Pregnancy.

**AHPRA** Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency.

**AMA** Australian Medical Association.

**CLCA** *Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 (SA)*

**Conscientious Objection** A refusal by a medical or other health practitioner to provide, or participate in, a lawful treatment or procedure because it conflicts with that practitioner's personal beliefs, values or moral concerns.

**Early Medication Abortion** (also known as Early Medication Termination) The use of pharmaceutical drugs to induce a termination of pregnancy. Most commonly mifepristone and misoprostol (referred to as MS-2 Step).

**Foetus** An unborn human more than eight weeks after conception.

**Foetal Abnormality** A genetic or other condition identified in a foetus which in some cases may make the foetus unviable and in other cases may indicate the foetus will be born with a genetic condition or disability.<sup>2</sup>

**Gestation** The period of development inside the womb between conception and birth.

**Gestational Limit** A restriction on when certain procedures, including terminations can be carried out, imposed by either legislation or clinical practice.

**Health Practitioner** A person registered under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (South Australia) Act 2010* to practice in the health profession. Includes medical practitioners, nurses & midwives, pharmacists, psychologists, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners and Chinese medicine practitioners.

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<sup>1</sup> SALRI has drawn on the terminology used by the QLRC (see Queensland Law Reform Commission, *Review of Termination of Pregnancy Laws: Consultation Paper* (WP 76) (December 2017) i-ii), the VLRC (see Victorian Law Reform Commission, *Law of Abortion*, Report No 15 (March 2008) 5) and in medical practice.

<sup>2</sup> SALRI, drawing on the VLRC, uses the term 'fetal abnormality' because it is used by medical practitioners to describe a positive test or indication for certain genetic or other conditions. SALRI does not wish to imply that a fetus which is diagnosed with such conditions is in any way 'abnormal'. See also Victorian Law Reform Commission, *Law of Abortion*, Report No 15 (March 2008) 5. This is a sensitive and complex area: at 44-46 [3.86]-[3.95].

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**Late Term Termination** A termination which occurs after 22 weeks gestation.

**MBA** Medical Board of Australia.

**Medical Abortion** (also known as Medical Termination) A procedure where medication is used to terminate the pregnancy and induce a still birth.

**Medical Practitioner** A person registered under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (South Australia) Act 2010* to practice in the medical profession, that is, a physician or surgeon. Medical Practitioners are also classified as Health Practitioners.

**Miscarriage** (also referred to as Spontaneous Termination) when a pregnancy ends naturally prior to 20 weeks gestation without a live birth.

**Morning After Pill** A contraceptive pill that is effective up to approximately seventy-two hours after intercourse.

**Neonatal** A period of one month after birth.

**Perinatal** The period between 20 weeks gestation and 28 days after birth.

**QLRC** Queensland Law Reform Commission

**RANZCOG** Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

**Safe Access Zone** A defined area around premises which provides an abortion related service in which certain conduct or behaviour is prohibited.

**Still Birth** When a pregnancy ends after 20 weeks through the birth of a baby without any signs of life.

**Surgical Abortion** (also referred to as Surgical Termination) A procedure where the contents of a women's uterus are surgically removed to terminate a pregnancy.

**Telehealth** The delivery of health-related services and information via telecommunications technologies.

**Termination of Pregnancy** (also referred to as Termination) A medical procedure to end a pregnancy, either through the use of medication or surgery, to remove the embryo or foetus and placenta from the uterus. See also Abortion.

**Viability** The time at which a foetus, if born, is said to be capable of existing independently.

**VLRC** Victorian Law Reform Commission

**WHO** World Health Organisation.

**Please note: SALRI does not, and cannot, provide legal advice to individuals. If you are in need of legal advice we encourage you to speak to a lawyer and/or contact a community legal service.**

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