



**AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
(SOUTH AUSTRALIA) INC.**

ABN 91 028 693 268

30 June 2023

Ms Lisa Walker,
Midwifery Advisor
For Dr Robyn Lawrence
Chief Executive
Dept of Health and Wellbeing
Email: lisa.walker@sa.gov.au

Dear Ms Walker

RE: DRAFT SA HEALTH POLICY – MIDWIFERY PRESCRIBING IN PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft policy to enable midwifery prescribing in public health service. The Australian Medical Association (SA) (AMA(SA)) is appreciative that the policy has been developed collaboratively with SA Health midwifery leaders, General Practitioner Obstetrician and Pharmacists.

We support the principle that midwives should be appropriately credentialled and monitored in their use of scheduled medicines that are commonly used in their particular context. We are also broadly supportive of the approach to enable each facility or LHN to decide which drugs a midwife may prescribe, noting that this must be determined with medical oversight.

However, there are concerns that the pressures to expand timely access to obstetric care may lead to greater reliance on independent midwives who are not adequately trained to manage the level of complexity in childbirth and pregnancy. Our members observe that there is an opportunity to expand the obstetric network of General Practitioners (GPs) to ensure these complexities are appropriately managed, particularly in country areas. There is a high level of medical skill required to manage the many issues associated with pregnancy including blood pressure, impaired glucose tolerance, recurrent urinary tract infections, anaemias, lifestyle factors such as smoking, drug use, skin conditions, orthopaedic conditions, mental health, domestic and family matters, gastro intestinal symptoms, cardiac symptoms etc. The skillset and scope of prescribing midwives should be regularly assessed by a body independent of the nursing community.

In this context the AMA(SA) notes the importance of a GP team approach where midwives work within their scope of training. There is an opportunity to build the capacity of the GP obstetric network to ensure the best quality care of women and babies and it is important that GPs remain central to post-natal care and early infant care.

We would be pleased to expand on any issue raised and warmly thank you for the opportunity to contribute.

Yours sincerely

President of the AMA(SA)