



THE OPERATION & THE LAW IN AUSTRALIA

The importance of an unplanned pregnancy was addressed and recently acknowledged in 2008 when the Victorian Parliament made amendments to the 1958 Victorian Crimes Act. In the 2008 The Abortion Law Reform Act decriminalised termination of pregnancy and set out guidelines for when abortion can take place. Any women of any age* can attend an abortion clinic in Victoria and access abortion until she is 24 weeks pregnancy. Abortion after 24 weeks is legal though it is usually performed for severe foetal abnormalities.

Two doctors must agree that the termination is necessary, considering the woman's medical, physical, psychological and social circumstances.

Under Victorian law a health practitioner who has a conscientious objection to providing abortion information must refer any woman seeing information about abortion services to another doctor who does not object. Doctors and nurses must perform an abortion in emergency situations where it is necessary to preserve the life of the pregnant woman, even if they object to abortion in general.

* Patients under the age of 16 will require a parent or legal guardian to consent for treatment. Please call our clinic if you have any questions regarding this matter.

The first legal reforms came in 1969, which allowed doctors to perform the operation if certain criteria were met. Before then women often sought help by untrained persons, resulting in many complications. This led to community fear regarding the safety of a surgical termination of pregnancy. Since the law was changed in 1969 doctors who have undergone training now perform the operation.

Statistically, mortality rates demonstrate that pregnancy termination is 10 times safer than pregnancy. The mortality rate from surgical termination has been estimated to be < 1 in 100,000. Minor morbidity (including psychological) has been predicted to be 10% of cases and serious morbidity in less than 1% of cases.

Please refer to "The Complication Form" for further information of the types of complications associated with this type of surgery.

Our principle female doctor has been trained by specialist Gynaecologists and then was employed by them for a number of years, working with their constant guidance. Her practices are reflective of her training. She has worked in three states of Australia and now has been operating for over 12 years in this field. Our protocols are reflective of the guidelines recommended by The Royal Australian and New Zealand college of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.