

Friday, 17 December 2021

Public Statement: Birthline Pregnancy Support Incorporated

The following statement can be attributed to Associate Professor Grant Davies, Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner:

In December 2019, a consumer complained to my office about Birthline Pregnancy Support Incorporated.

The consumer expressed concerns that after speaking to Birthline, they believe Birthline does not advertise “correctly, accurately” that its service is “pro-life”. “Pro-life” was the phrase used by the consumer.

I have thoroughly investigated the complaint. The investigation found Birthline:

- is a community service which falls within my jurisdiction; and
- is not transparent, on its website, about its anti-termination philosophy and ethos.

I made several recommendations to Birthline to ensure that consumers who contact it know its underlying philosophy and ethos.

While Birthline has yet to fully implement the recommendations, some progress has been made.

Nevertheless, I deem it appropriate to inform the South Australian public about this investigation.

My decision to issue this public statement and publish a de-identified report should not be viewed as commentary about pregnancy terminations. I make no observations on that issue.

My purpose is to emphasise that service providers should be transparent with consumers about their philosophy or limitations enabling the consumer to make informed decisions about the health or community services they seek.