

**Legislative Council—No 75**

As introduced and read a first time, 14 October 2020

South Australia

**Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2020**

A BILL FOR

An Act to reform the law relating to pregnancy terminations, to regulate the conduct of health practitioners in relation to pregnancy terminations and to make related amendments to the *Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935* and the *Intervention Orders (Prevention of Abuse) Act 2009*.

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**The Parliament of South Australia enacts as follows:**

## **Part 1—Preliminary**

### **1—Short title**

This Act may be cited as the *Termination of Pregnancy Act 2020*.

### **2—Commencement**

5 This Act comes into operation on a day to be fixed by proclamation.

### **3—Interpretation**

In this Act, unless the contrary intention appears—

*assist* in a termination includes—

- 10
- (a) obtaining on behalf of, or supplying to, another person a drug or other substance for use in a termination; and
  - (b) any other act that directly and materially aids in the performance of a termination,

but does not include acts of a kind prescribed by the regulations;

15 *Department* means the administrative unit of the Public Service that is responsible for assisting a Minister in the administration of the *Health Care Act 2008*;

*hospital* has the same meaning as in the *Health Care Act 2008*;

*medical practitioner* means a person registered under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law* to practise in the medical profession, other than as a student;

*private day procedure centre* has the same meaning as in the *Health Care Act 2008*;

20 *private hospital* has the same meaning as in the *Health Care Act 2008*;

*registered health practitioner* means—

- (a) a medical practitioner; or
- (b) any other person registered under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law* to practise in a health profession, other than as a student;

25 *termination* means an intentional termination of a pregnancy in any way, including, for example, by—

- (a) administering or prescribing a drug or other substance; or
- (b) using a medical instrument or other thing,

and *perform a termination* and to *terminate* have corresponding meanings.

### **4—Interaction with other Acts**

30 This Act is in addition to and does not limit or derogate from the provisions of the *Consent to Medical Treatment and Palliative Care Act 1995*, the *Controlled Substances Act 1984* or any other Act.

## Part 2—Termination of pregnancies

### Division 1—Lawful termination of pregnancies

#### 5—Terminations may be lawfully performed in South Australia

(1) A termination may be performed on a person if—

- 5 (a) in the case of a termination performed by a medical practitioner acting in the ordinary course of the practitioner's profession—the termination is performed on a person who is not more than 22 weeks and 6 days pregnant; or
- (b) in the case of a termination performed by any other registered health practitioner acting in the ordinary course of the practitioner's profession—
- 10 (i) the termination is performed by administering a prescription drug or by prescribing a drug; and
- (ii) the termination is performed on a person who is not more than 63 days pregnant; and
- (iii) the registered health practitioner is authorised to prescribe the drug under section 18 of the *Controlled Substances Act 1984*.

(2) A medical practitioner may perform a termination on a person who is more than 22 weeks and 6 days pregnant if—

- (a) the medical practitioner is acting in the ordinary course of the practitioner's profession; and
- 20 (b) the termination is performed in accordance with section 6.

#### 6—Terminations by medical practitioner from 22 weeks and 6 days

(1) A medical practitioner may perform a termination on a person who is more than 22 weeks and 6 days pregnant if—

- 25 (a) the medical practitioner considers that, in all the circumstances, the termination is medically appropriate; and
- (b) a second medical practitioner is consulted and that practitioner considers that, in all the circumstances, the termination is medically appropriate.

(2) In considering whether a termination is medically appropriate, a medical practitioner must consider—

- 30 (a) all relevant medical circumstances; and
- (b) the professional standards and guidelines that apply to the medical practitioner in relation to the performance of the termination.

(3) Without limiting section 13 of the *Consent to Medical Treatment and Palliative Care Act 1995*, a medical practitioner may, in an emergency, perform a termination on a person who is more than 22 weeks and 6 days pregnant, without acting under subsection (1), if the medical practitioner considers it necessary to perform the termination to—

- (a) save the person's life, or

- (b) save another foetus.

### **7—Registered health practitioners who may assist**

A registered health practitioner who performs a termination that is authorised by this Act may be assisted by a registered health practitioner acting in the ordinary course of the practitioner's profession.

### **8—Registered health practitioner may refuse to perform or assist in terminations**

- (1) If a registered health practitioner conscientiously objects to—
- (a) performing a termination on a person; or
  - (b) assisting in the performance of a termination on a person; or
  - (c) providing advice to a person about the performance of a termination, the practitioner must—
  - (d) immediately inform the person of their conscientious objection; and
  - (e) in the case of an objection to performing a termination or providing advice about the performance of a termination—
    - (i) transfer the person's care to a registered health practitioner who, in the practitioner's opinion, can provide the requested service and does not have a conscientious objection to the performance of the termination or providing advice about the performance of the termination; or
    - (ii) provide the person with information on how to locate or contact such a registered health practitioner.
- (2) A registered health practitioner will be taken to have complied with an obligation under subsection (1)(e)(ii) if the practitioner gives the person information in the prescribed form.
- (3) This section does not limit any duty owed by a registered health practitioner to—
- (a) perform, or to assist in the performance of, a termination in an emergency; or
  - (b) provide after care or ancillary medical treatment associated with a termination.

### **9—Protection from liability**

- (1) A registered health practitioner who performs a termination in accordance with this Act, or a registered health practitioner who assists or is otherwise involved in such a termination—
- (a) incurs no criminal liability for an act or omission in so doing; and
  - (b) incurs no civil liability for an act or omission in so doing, provided that the act or omission was done or made in good faith and without negligence.
- (2) A registered health practitioner who, in accordance with section 8, refuses to—
- (a) perform a termination on a person; or
  - (b) assist in the performance of a termination on a person; or

(c) provide advice to a person about the performance of a termination,  
incurs no civil liability for an act or omission in so doing.

(3) For the purposes of this section, a reference to the civil liability of a person includes a reference to liability arising under disciplinary proceedings or similar proceedings.

## 5 **Division 2—Offences relating to unlawful termination of pregnancies**

### **10—Termination of pregnancy by unqualified person**

(1) An unqualified person who performs a termination on another person commits an offence.

Maximum penalty: 7 years imprisonment.

10 (2) An unqualified person who assists in the performance of a termination on another person commits an offence.

Maximum penalty: 5 years imprisonment.

(3) In this section—

*unqualified person* means—

15 (a) in relation to the performance of a termination under subsection (1)—a person who is not a registered health practitioner authorised under this Act to perform a termination; or

(b) in relation to assisting in the performance of a termination under subsection (2)—a person who is not a registered health practitioner acting in the ordinary course of the practitioner's profession.

### **11—DPP's consent required for prosecution under Part**

A prosecution for an offence against this Part cannot be commenced without the Director of Public Prosecution's written consent.

## **Division 3—Protection from criminal liability**

### 25 **12—Person does not commit offence for termination on themselves**

Despite any other Act or law, a person who consents to, assists in or performs, or attempts to perform, a termination on themselves does not commit an offence.

## **Part 3—Miscellaneous**

### **13—Conduct and performance of registered health practitioners**

30 (1) In considering a matter under an Act about a registered health practitioner's professional conduct or performance, regard may be had to whether the practitioner—

(a) terminates a pregnancy other than as authorised under section 5 or 6; or

(b) assists another registered health practitioner to terminate a pregnancy other than as authorised under section 7; or

35 (c) contravenes section 8.

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- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(b), a person assists another registered health practitioner to terminate a pregnancy if the person—
- (a) obtains on behalf of, or supplies to, another person a drug or other substance for the purposes of the termination; or
  - (b) takes any other step to organise or facilitate, or otherwise takes part in, the termination.
- (3) The matters to which subsection (1) applies include the following:
- (a) a notification under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (South Australia) Act 2010*;
  - (b) a complaint under the *Health and Community Services Complaints Act 2004*.
- (4) This Act does not limit any duty a registered health practitioner has to comply with professional standards or guidelines that apply to health practitioners.

#### 14—Restrictions on publication of certain information

Subject to this or any other Act or law, a person engaged or formerly engaged in connection with the operation of this Act must not publish information or data (however described) that identifies, or contains information tending to identify the name or address of a person who has sought or received a termination.

Maximum penalty:

- (a) in the case of a natural person—\$50 000;
- (b) in the case of a body corporate—\$120 000.

#### 15—Confidentiality

- (1) A person engaged or formerly engaged in connection with the operation of this Act must not disclose personal information relating to a person obtained while so engaged except to the extent that he or she may be authorised or required to disclose that information—
- (a) by the Chief Executive or their employer; or
  - (b) in the case of information obtained while working at an incorporated hospital or SAAS—by the hospital or SAAS (as the case requires).

Maximum penalty: \$10 000.

- (2) Subsection (1) does not prevent a person from—
- (a) disclosing information as required or authorised by or under law; or
  - (b) disclosing information at the request, or with the consent, of—
    - (i) the person to whom the information relates; or
    - (ii) a guardian of the person to whom the information relates; or
    - (iii) a medical agent of the person to whom the information relates; or
    - (iv) a substitute decision-maker for the person to whom the information relates (within the meaning of the *Advance Care Directives Act 2013*); or

(c) disclosing information to a relative, carer or friend of the person to whom the information relates if—

(i) the disclosure is reasonably required for the treatment, care or rehabilitation of the person; and

(ii) there is no reason to believe that the disclosure would be contrary to the person's best interests; or

(d) subject to the regulations (if any)—

(i) disclosing information to a health or other service provider if the disclosure is reasonably required for the treatment, care or rehabilitation of the person to whom the information relates; or

(ii) disclosing information by entering the information into an electronic records system established for the purpose of enabling the recording or sharing of information between persons or bodies involved in the provision of health services; or

(iii) disclosing information to such extent as is reasonably required in connection with the management or administration of a hospital or SAAS (including for the purposes of charging for a service); or

(e) disclosing information if the disclosure is reasonably required to lessen or prevent a serious threat to the life, health or safety of a person, or a serious threat to public health or safety; or

(f) disclosing information for medical or social research purposes if the research methodology had been approved by an ethics committee and there is no reason to believe that the disclosure would be contrary to the person's best interests; or

(g) disclosing information in accordance with the regulations.

(3) Subsection (2)(c) does not authorise the disclosure of personal information in contravention of a direction given by the person to whom the information relates.

(4) Information that has been disclosed under subsection (2) for a particular purpose must not be used for any other purpose by—

(a) the person to whom the information was disclosed; or

(b) any other person who gains access to the information (whether properly or improperly and whether directly or indirectly) as a result of that disclosure.

Maximum penalty: \$10 000.

(5) The regulations may make further provision in respect of the disclosure of information obtained in the course of the administration of this Act.

(6) For the purposes of this section, a reference to a person *engaged in connection with the operation of this Act* includes a reference to a person engaged in connection with the operation of the *Health Care Act 2008* under section 93(1) of that Act.

(7) In this section—

*Chief Executive* has the same meaning as in the *Health Care Act 2008*;



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*personal information* means information or an opinion, whether true or not, relating to a natural person or the affairs of a natural person whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion;

SAAS has the same meaning as in the *Health Care Act 2008*.

## 5 **16—Review of Act**

- (1) The Minister must cause a review of this Act and its administration and operation to be conducted on the expiry of 5 years from its commencement.
- (2) The review must be completed within 6 months and the results of the review embodied in a written report.
- 10 (3) The Minister must cause a copy of the report to be laid before both Houses of Parliament within 12 sitting days after receiving the report.

## **17—Regulations**

- (1) The Governor may make such regulations as are contemplated by this Act or as are necessary or expedient for the purposes of this Act.
- 15 (2) Without limiting the generality of subsection (1), the regulations may—
  - (a) require any registered health practitioner, hospital or private day procedure centre to collect and provide the Minister or the Department with data and statistics in relation to services connected with the performance of terminations; and
  - 20 (b) require reports or information of any other kind to be provided to the Minister or the Department.
- (3) The regulations may—
  - (a) make different provision according to the persons, things or circumstances to which they are expressed to apply; and
  - 25 (b) be of general or limited application; and
  - (c) provide that a matter or thing is to be determined, dispensed with, regulated or prohibited according to the discretion of the Minister or another prescribed authority; and
  - 30 (d) make provisions of a saving or transitional nature consequent on the enactment of this Act or on the commencement of specified provisions of this Act or on the making of regulations under this Act.

## **Schedule 1—Related amendments**

### **Part 1—Preliminary**

#### **1—Amendment provisions**

- 35 In this Schedule, a provision under a heading referring to the amendment of a specified Act amends the Act so specified.

## **Part 2—Amendment of *Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935***

### **2—Amendment of section 12A—Causing death by an intentional act of violence**

Section 12A—delete "(other than abortion<sup>1</sup>)"

### **3—Repeal of Part 3 Division 17**

Part 3 Division 17—delete Division 17

### **4—Amendment of Schedule 11—Abolition of certain offences**

Schedule 11, clause 1—after (29) insert:

; and

(30) abortion.

## **Part 3—Amendment of *Intervention Orders (Prevention of Abuse) Act 2009***

### **5—Amendment of section 8—Meaning of abuse—domestic and non-domestic**

Section 8(4)—after paragraph (oc) insert:

(od) coercing a person to terminate a pregnancy;

(oe) coercing a person to not terminate a pregnancy;