

MEDIA RELEASE

The Women's seeks TGA approval to provide medical abortion with mifepristone

The Royal Women's Hospital (the Women's) today announced it had applied to the Therapeutic Goods Administration for approval of ten senior medical practitioners as authorised prescribers of mifepristone for the provision of medical abortion.

Upon approval of the application, the practitioners will be able to provide medical abortion with mifepristone and misoprostol in accordance with established medical evidence and international clinical practice. Initially, medical abortion with mifepristone will be restricted to women with special medical needs.

The Women's Chief Executive, Dale Fisher, said: "We remain optimistic that in the near future a pharmaceutical company will seek to register mifepristone with the TGA and that the TGA will licence the drug for use, thereby negating the need for medical practitioners to apply for authorised prescriber status.

"In the interim, we felt strongly that it was appropriate for the Women's – as Australia's first women's hospital – to lead the introduction of this important health service for women."

The Women's application to the TGA states that medical abortion will only be offered as an alternative to surgical abortion when the clinician considers that this method of abortion is clinically preferable, for example when surgical abortion carries higher than usual risks or likelihood of failure or surgical abortion cannot be provided.

Mifepristone is a synthetic steroid that inhibits the actions of progesterone in the maintenance of early pregnancy. The drug is utilised by medical practitioners throughout the world to induce a medical termination of early pregnancy.

Currently, Australian abortion service providers almost exclusively perform termination of early pregnancy via a surgical procedure because alternatives to mifepristone are less effective.

The Women's Associate Director, Women's Services, Dr Chris Bayly said: "Research has shown that mifepristone, taken in conjunction with synthetic prostaglandins, can be safely used to induce medical abortion.



the women's
the royal women's hospital
victoria

“Many women undergoing a termination of pregnancy want to access safe medical abortion in preference to surgical abortion. We believe access to medical abortion via mifepristone is an alternative that should be available.”

In contrast to Australia, women in the United States, United Kingdom, New Zealand and many other countries worldwide are able to access medical abortion services via the administration of mifepristone and prostaglandin.

Further information:

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