

# Home birth group fears for future

How 7/2/83

DUNEDIN, Today (PA). — The New Zealand Home Birth Association predicts that fewer general practitioners and midwives will be available to attend home births if the recommendations of the Maternity Services Committee of the Board of Health are implemented.

"This is likely to lead to an increase in non-professionally attended births, if the committee's recommendations are implemented," said association president Mrs Marilyn Walker.

"If the committee was sincerely interested in the safety of mother and baby the recommendations would include an endorsement of home birth as a desirable option for low-risk mothers."

Statistical evidence and research, both in New Zealand and overseas, indicated that properly conducted home birth was at least as safe, if not safer, than hospital birth, she said.

"The Board of Health has chosen to ignore this evidence although it is available to them. The Maternity Services Committee is comprised mainly of male obstetricians and states that it is opposed to home birth, so its recommendations must be considered within this context."