

Baby Bryony marks last home birth delivery

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By ANNA SMITH

BRYONY Kayes, of Kelburn, is something of a celebrity even though she is only four days old.

Early last Friday she was born at her parents' home and was the last baby to be delivered by the only home birth midwife in Wellington, Lynne McLean.

Ms McLean, who has attended home births in Wellington for the last five years, said she had no choice but to leave the job and deprive Wellington parents of an alternative to hospital births.

"The situation had got a bit desperate for me because of the lack of support and the lack of money," she said last night.

"The money was so bad and the future looked so bleak for home births that I had to do it for my own sake."

Before giving up her job Ms McLean had to ring 30 people who had hoped to have their babies at home.

"One or two were pretty upset and burst into tears on the phone," she said. "Quite a lot put on a brave face while they were on the phone, but I heard later on that they were in tears in their doctor's surgery."

So far no other midwife has come forward to take over the home births so the Hutt and Wellington regions are now without a domiciliary midwife.

Meanwhile Terry and Marianne Kayes are relieved that Bryony chose to be born on Friday.

"Having made up our minds that we wanted to have a home birth it would have been disappointing to miss out by 12 or 24 hours," Mrs Kayes said last night.

Mr and Mrs Kayes said the



MRS KAYES . . .
"worthwhile experience."

birth was a worthwhile experience for them and their three children aged nine, eight and six.

Mr Kayes said: "Having gone through it I feel it's a pretty good experience and it seems a shame that it's not available for others."

"From the family point of view it's a superb experience. It's not everybody's choice but I feel strongly that it should be an option."

Ms McLean said she spent about three hours with the family, and was paid \$36. Bryony was delivered fairly quickly.

But, had the birth taken 12 hours Ms McLean said she still would have been paid \$36, while the doctor who made a 10-minute visit the following morning was paid \$75.

Mr Kayes said even if another midwife took on the job, she would find it difficult to continue on so little money.



MR KAYES holds Bryony, four days old.