

Midwives lobby MPs for pay

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THE HOME Birth Association says it will lobby every Member of Parliament this year about payment for domiciliary midwives.

The association's newly-elected national president, Mrs Henriette Kemp, said domiciliary midwives could not afford to do home births fulltime. Even if they had a full case load in a year they would only earn \$8000 from the maternity services benefit.

"We feel that domiciliary midwifery is a valuable and worthy fulltime profession which is deserving of the same salary as a hospital midwife," she said.

Mrs Kemp said it was ridiculous having a law saying every woman had a right to a home birth if the Government did not provide the necessary services.

In areas such as Wellington, Auckland and Northland there was a severe shortage of domiciliary midwives because they had been forced out of their jobs as a result of the low pay.

In other areas it was difficult to have a home delivery because of restraints placed on midwives by local hospital boards and district health offices.

Mrs Kemp, who is Wellington co-ordinator of the Home Birth Association, was elected national president at the association's fourth annual conference in Auckland last weekend.



MRS KEMP