



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

HEAD OFFICE

MACARTHY TRUST BUILDING,
LAMBTON QUAY, WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND.

P.O. BOX 5013
TELEX NZ 3571
TELEPHONE:
727 627

11 August 1980

The Secretary
N.Z. Home Birth Association
PO Box 7093
Wellesley Street
AUCKLAND

Dear Miss McFarlane

Thank you for your letter of 28 July 1980.

I am grateful for your offer of assistance with information for our discussions about midwifery services in the community and if there are any specific points of information which arise which have not been included in the submissions, we will accept your offer.

The submissions we have already received from the various branches of the Home Birth Association and from individuals have been very informative and helpful.

As there are not a large number of domiciliary midwives in New Zealand, it was possible to contact those who had contracts with the Department of Health and various members of the Committee have interviewed the majority of them in different centres and listened to their views on how the midwives see that standards can be raised. These interviews have also proved most informative.

It is not within the power of the Committee, or me as Chairman, to change the membership of the Committee. The Maternity Services Committee is a subcommittee of the Board of Health of which the Minister of Health is Chairman. The Board of Health determines the membership of the Committee and the Minister appoints the particular nominees.

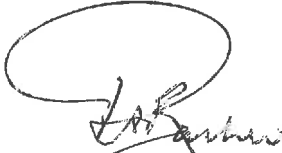
There are two midwives on the Committee and these are nominated by the New Zealand Nurses Association - there is no restriction on whom they nominate, providing they are midwives. There is one member representing "the interests of women" and this member is nominated by the National Council of Women.

It is not possible to divide submissions into those who support domiciliary midwifery and those who oppose it. The Committee is addressing the problem of raising the standards of care in the community and this is the responsibility of the committee irrespective of conflicting views as to the particular merits of different types of practice.

2.

I am sure that whether or not you favour hospital confinements you would still argue that there should be a high standard of practice in hospitals for women who elect to go there.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'R. A. Barker', enclosed within a large, hand-drawn oval.

R. A. Barker
Chairman
Maternity Services Committee