



Independent Hospital Pricing Authority

Consultation Paper on the Pricing Framework 2016-17

6 August 2015

By email: [teakle@maternitycoalition.org.au](mailto:teakle@maternitycoalition.org.au)

Dear IHPA,

Maternity Choices Australia (MCA) would like to make input to the Consultation Paper on the Pricing Framework 2016-17.

MCA is Australia's peak maternity care consumer representative group. Our goal is for Australian women to receive high quality maternity care, in a framework of informed choice. We particularly promote women's access to community-based continuity of midwifery care, as a primary care strategy.

Our feedback on your consultation paper:

We support the proposal to introduce bundled payments for maternity care.

- This should be designed to drive continuity of primary carer, in models which align with the evidence for improved outcomes. We note that there is an abundance of Australian and international evidence supporting the improved outcomes and lower cost of continuity of midwifery care through antenatal, labour and birth, and postnatal care. Women also consistently indicate their preference for this model of care.
- We see the potential for well-designed bundled primary maternity care funding mechanism to address Australia's excessive rates of medical intervention in maternity care. E.g. Britain, New Zealand and several European countries, with stronger primary care models in their maternity services, achieve similar or better clinical outcomes with caesarean rates approximately 10 percentage points lower than Australia. This indicates that lower cost, reduced harm to women, and a better start to parenting for families is possible in Australia.

We would be happy to provide references or other information on request.

Sincerely,

Bruce Teakle

Maternity Choices Australia Committee Member, of behalf of the Committee