

## **SUPPORTING VISIBILITY AND ACCESS TO ABORTION SERVICES**

### **Authors:**

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### **Background/Purpose:**

Abortion is a common gynaecological procedure, however negative sociocultural attitudes such as stigma and isolation characterise abortion care for both women and pregnant people seeking services and health professionals as providers of care. Funded through the Victorian Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy (2017-2020), two innovative programs 1800Myoptions and Sexual & Reproductive Health Clinical Champion Project (CCP) work closely together to provide visibility to abortion as healthcare and to strengthen the abortion service system to deliver evidence based abortion care.

### **Approach:**

Alongside a free and confidential phonenumber, the 1800 My Options model incorporates a website with geo-mapped opt-in database of abortion providers, enabling women and pregnant people to independently search for services. Phone line callers are provided with service pathway options for appropriate private and publicly registered lists of providers. The CCP is based at the Women's, a tertiary hospital and the largest public provider of abortion services in Victoria. The CCP provides the clinical expertise to support the abortion provider workforce. Each of these components build a more responsive and evidence based pathway to abortion care.

### **Outcomes/Impact:**

The 1800MyOptions database makes abortion services visible and tracks supply and demand across the state. Provision of the Women's clinical expertise and leadership has provided training opportunities and resources to guide best practice abortion care. Working together and across multiple layers of the service system, 1800Myoptions and CCP have supported the abortion service system to become more visible and accessible to both service seekers and providers.

### **Innovation and Significance:**

A multi-dimensional approach is required to reduce the isolation and stigma that characterises abortion services both for women and pregnant people seeking services, the clinical workforce and service system where care takes place.

### **Disclosure of Interest Statement:**

*1800 My Options is a service of Women's Health Victoria.*

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There are no conflicts to declare.