

## Free abortion and unplanned pregnancy support helpline launched in WA

*The 1800 4 Choice helpline is staffed by nurses with experience in sexual health and abortion care. A user-friendly website has been designed to complement the helpline and provide information and support around abortion care and pregnancy choices for people experiencing unplanned pregnancy as well as clinicians and allied health professionals.*

The 1800 4 Choice helpline is a confidential service administrated by Sexual Health Quarters and supported by the WA Department of Health.

The Abortion Legislation Reform Bill 2023 decriminalised abortion in Western Australia, removing many unnecessary barriers to abortion care. The new helpline and website will bolster accessibility and ensure everyone has access to clear and unbiased information so they can make a decision that is right for them.

1800 4 Choice provides support and information about:

- Medication/surgical abortion
- Abortion legislation
- Pregnancy options counselling
- Abortion providers in WA
- Clinical education and training

The service connects people to abortion providers, giving them a greater choice in the care they receive, and improved access to those facing barriers to abortion.






Just over three months after 1800 4 Choice phone lines opened, we have launched [4choice.org.au](http://4choice.org.au) to provide additional support to the Western Australian community. The website provides resources for people with questions about unplanned pregnancy and abortion care to ensure everyone has access to the accurate and unbiased information about their options so they can make an informed decision about their pregnancy. It also provides comprehensive information and support for clinicians to meet the sexual and reproductive health needs of their patients and clients.

The final stage of the 1800 4 Choice rollout is expected to be completed late August 2024 and will include the introduction of a dynamic digital platform to the website. The geomap feature has been custom built to support individuals seeking an abortion, making information about reproductive healthcare more accessible and transparent. The innovative search tool will allow users to filter by the type of support they need by location.

Abortion care providers, including pharmacists dispensing medical abortion pills, will have the opportunity to be publicly listed on the website's mapping feature, or feature on a private list accessible only to those working on the helpline. Interested parties can fill out a simple form on our website. Once it is confirmed that they meet the criteria to be included, they will be listed on the nominated mapping.

This comprehensive service will address many of the current inequities in abortion access, especially for those living in regional and remote Western Australia. It also provides assurance to health practitioners that their patients have additional sources of support.

### Contact 1800 4 Choice:

-  1800 424 642
-  [helpline@4choice.org.au](mailto:helpline@4choice.org.au)
-  [4choice.org.au](http://4choice.org.au)
-  @18004Choice
-  1800 4 Choice

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Coordinator - Marketing and Communications  
[info@4choice.org.au](mailto:info@4choice.org.au)

“Everyone should be able to access abortion information and care when they need it. 1800 4 Choice offers callers and online visitors accurate information about pregnancy choices, abortion providers and reproductive health.

“SHQ has been a strong voice for reproductive freedom and autonomy since opening in 1972 and our organisation is always looking for ways to further support reproductive choice and autonomy.

“The 1800 4 choice helpline and website will be a useful tool in supporting people in navigating barriers to abortion care to exercise their right to reproductive choice. This project is a crucial part of SHQ’s long-term plan to continue to build on our provision of quality, accessible abortion care, and dismantle barriers surrounding abortion access.

“This highlights the significant role specialist non-government services play in supporting our health system and its clients.

“In a global context with reproductive rights increasingly under attack, it is great to see the WA State Government doing everything in their power to ensure people have access to safe abortions.”

**Debra Barnes, Chief Executive Officer, Sexual Health Quarters**

“Many of the clients we see in our clinic experience barriers to sexual and reproductive health.

“As the largest non-government provider of sexual health and relationship wellbeing services, SHQ is uniquely positioned to meet the needs of the community today, while being a powerful force for political and social change in the future.

“We offer low-or-no cost clinical services, including medical abortion, free unintended pregnancy counselling, and have administered a successful sexual health helpline for over 25 years so we are well-placed to operate 1800 4 Choice and ensure it meets the needs of the community and sector.

“1800 4 Choice will help reduce stigma around abortion by improving clinician’s willingness and ability to discuss abortion care with clients, reaffirming its place in everyday healthcare. Additionally, the opportunity to discuss pregnancy options with an unbiased clinician has the potential to dispel myths about abortion perpetuated by inaccurate online content and deliberately misleading information disseminated by organisations opposed to reproductive choice.

“The earlier in pregnancy an abortion takes place the safer it is. By providing people with streamlined support that is immediate, unbiased, confidential and free, we predict more people will have access to early medical abortion, meaning lower costs, less invasive procedures and lower risk for patients, as well as reduced financial and structural pressures on the health care system.”

**Dr Samantha Johnson, Medical Director, Sexual Health Quarters**

*Debra and Samantha are available for further comment.*