



**Association for Improvements in
the Maternity Services - Ireland**

Supporting Women Making Advocacy Work

7th March 2016

Make Mothers Matter Conference

www.aimsireland.com



**Association for Improvements in
the Maternity Services - Ireland**

Who we are:

Advocacy & support organisation for women and
their families in the maternity care services in Ireland

Established in 2007

Voluntary Association with Charity Status

Run by dedicated small team of volunteers

Funded entirely by membership fees & donations

Supporting Women – Promoting Change



**Association for Improvements in
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Making Advocacy Work

Listening

Confidential Support

Giving Women A Voice

Shout Out

42 weeks

What Matters to You Survey

Taking Action

Support Education Information Identifying Highlighting

Raising Awareness Campaigning Lobbying Representing Engaging Participating



**Association for Improvements in
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We Advocate for: SAFE CARE

Universal Safe Respectful Professional Woman-centred Care

Safe

Choice Options Access
Recording Statistics Audits
Effective Feedback Mechanisms

Respectful

Respectful care is safer Care

Professional

Evidence-based Timely Communication

Information

Informed Decision Making Informed Consent/Refusal

Perinatal Mental Health Care

Recognition & Prevention of factors leading to Birth Trauma
PND Importance of mental health & wellbeing PTSD

**Positive Impact & Benefits
for Women Families Community**



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Why we need Advocacy

Historically

**1944 Symphysiotomy re-introduced & the
ensuing consequences**

**1969 Active Management of Labour:
interference with the natural process**

1970 Right to life of the unborn child

**1980s Midwives were sidelined: introduction
of technology**

Supporting Women – Promoting Change

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Currently

Ireland – ‘safest place to have a baby’? –

Lack of transparency & statistics

Under-reported Maternal & Baby deaths

Constitutional & legal position of pregnant women

Absence of Choice of care models

Lack of perinatal mental health policy and resources

Lack of support for breastfeeding

Inadequate provision of evidence-based care

Frequent lack of respectful care



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What matters to you survey: 2014

Women who had given birth between 2010 – 2014

2,836 participants responded to 100 questions

Independent analysis

Main findings: 55% wanted midwife-led care 42.6% for community care

Over 90% said women should have choice of free-standing birth centres and community based care

Only 5.5% had availability of midwife-led care

The 8th Amendment to the Irish Constitution

1983

'The State acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and, with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother, guarantees in its laws to respect, and, as far as practicable, by its laws to defend and vindicate that right.'

Ireland only country in the world

13th Amendment Right to Travel
1992



Impact on maternity care

Removes woman's right of consent during pregnancy

When no doesn't mean no

TFMR - Miscarriage – Sepsis
Anomaly Scans
Perinatal Mental Health

Right to Life in Pregnancy Act 2013

X Case

Savita

Hamilton vs HSE

Miss Y

PP vs HSE

Control – not Care

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**National Maternity Strategy
2016**

**AIMSI Robust Participation
Moving Forward
Implementation
Development of Key Areas
Perinatal Mental Health**



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**AIMS Ireland will continue to support & advocate
engaging with relevant bodies:**

- **Health care providers**
 - **Policy makers i.e. health & safety regulators**
 - **Academics & educators**
 - **Professional associations**
- to ensure a safe easily accessible comprehensive
maternity service is available to all in Ireland**

WOMEN SUPPORTING WOMEN



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