Supporting Women
Making Advocacy Work

7th March 2016
Make Mothers Matter Conference

www.aimsireland.com
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
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
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
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
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
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.’

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

Ireland only country in the world

13th Amendment  Right to Travel
1992
AIMSI Ireland

Association for Improvements in the Maternity Services - Ireland

National Maternity Strategy 2016

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