



Tuesday, 26 June 2012

For immediate release

RESPONSE TO 'THE TERMINATORS: USING ABORTION AS A FORM OF CONTRACEPTION'

Women make decisions about their sexual and reproductive health for a range of reasons, and should be able to readily access both contraception and abortion. Very few women use abortion as contraception.

"Abortion is not being used as an alternative to contraception. Women make the decision to have an abortion for a number of other reasons", said Rita Butera, Executive Director of Women's Health Victoria.

A 2009 University of Melbourne study found that women considered factors such as their ability to be a good parent, the views of their partner, and financial matters in their decision whether to undergo an abortion.

"Even so, there is more we can do to prevent unplanned pregnancy. It is important that young women and men are educated about, and able to access, affordable and reliable methods of contraception.

"The costs of many forms of contraception remain prohibitive, particularly those that are not covered by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. There is also a lack of public awareness that emergency contraception (the morning after pill) is available over the counter at many pharmacies without the need to see a general practitioner.

"To minimise the costs of unintended pregnancy, it is essential that contraception is readily available", Ms Butera said.

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