



PHARMACISTS FOR CHOICE

Submission To The Citizens Assembly To Recommend A Referendum On The Repeal Of The 8th Amendment

The 8th Amendment - Article 40.3.3 in the Constitution of Ireland - makes it impossible for anyone to have an abortion in Ireland unless their life is in immediate danger, as determined by a panel of medical professionals.

As pharmacists, we know that no method of contraception is 100% effective in preventing pregnancies in all cases, and even emergency contraception (the "morning after pill") has a failure rate of between 1% and 3%, even with perfect use. This means that women who have taken all necessary precautions can still be faced with a crisis pregnancy, and are left with no option, if they

choose not to carry the pregnancy to term, but to travel abroad for a termination or procure an illegal abortion at home.

We are also frustrated that we cannot legally provide the support and advice requested by our patients when needed, due to restrictions about the provision of information about abortion in Ireland. As healthcare professionals, we are primarily concerned about the welfare of our patients and strongly believe that the 8th Amendment is a barrier to accessing what is a common, safe and necessary medical procedure in Ireland.

The role of the Constitution is not to determine access to or legality of medical treatment. As pharmacists, we urge the Citizens Assembly to recommend a referendum on the repeal of the 8th Amendment.

Signed on behalf of Pharmacists For Choice,

Helen Danaher MPSI

Ciara Kenny MPSI

Denise Hogan MPSI

Maura O'Donnell BPharm