



**Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA**

Minister for Health

Minister for Families and Community Services

Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Member for Kurrajong

---

Mr Tom Duncan  
Clerk, ACT Legislative Assembly  
GPO Box 1020  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mr ~~Duncan~~ **Tom**

Thank you for your letter dated 7 February 2023 with a copy of the terms of Petition 042-22 and 001-23 lodged by Ms Jo Clay MLA, calling on the ACT Government to invest in building a freestanding birth centre in the north side of Canberra. This letter is my response to the petition in line with Standing Order 100.

The ACT Government is committed to delivering better care when and where people need it. Petition 042-22 and 001-23 complement the Government's commitment to enhance capacity within the ACT's Birth Centres as outlined in *Maternity in Focus: The ACT Public Maternity System Plan 2022-2032* and continue to improve maternity services to provide the right care, at the right time, and in the right place which meets the needs of the woman or pregnant person and their family.

The Assembly, on the same day as the petition was presented, passed a resolution on Maternity Services and Birthing Centres. This provides the Government with the opportunity to consider the early design and feasibility of establishing a co-designed free-standing birth centre, in the context of the current health service planning for a new northside hospital.

I acknowledge and thank the ACT community for its support for maternity services and for bringing forward this petition.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA  
28 March 2023

---

ACT Legislative Assembly London Circuit, GPO Box 1020, Canberra ACT 2601



+61 2 6205 2661



stephen-smith@act.gov.au



@RachelSS\_MLA



rachelSSMLA



rachelss\_mla