

1800 my options

ABORTION RIGHTS IN VICTORIA

1865



Victoria's initial founding laws include the criminalisation of abortion.

1958



Abortion criminalisation further solidified in The Crimes Act 1958; it was a criminal offence to "attempt to bring about, or to assist a person to bring about, an unlawful termination of pregnancy."

1969



In a landmark legal ruling, Justice Clifford Menhennit declared that the abortions performed by Dr Charles Davidson were lawful, as they were necessary to "protect an individual's life, physical or psychological wellbeing."

1972



Australia's first private abortion clinic - the Fertility Control Clinic - was opened in East Melbourne by Dr Bertram Wainer. At the time, it had no upfront fees, helping to increase access to professional surgical pregnancy termination.

2008



Following decades of advocacy, abortion was decriminalised through the Abortion Law Reform Act 2008. The Act states that "termination of pregnancy by registered medical practitioner at not more than 24 weeks" was now legal and available on demand.

2016



Safe Access Zones were legislated in 2016, restricting protests within 150 metres of an abortion provider. These zones help protect patients to access essential healthcare with privacy, safety and dignity, as well as ensuring safety for healthcare workers and local residents.

2015



Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) was listed on the PBS for the first time in 2015. MTP consists of two medications - mifepristone and misoprostol - sold as "MS-2 Step". These medications work to induce an abortion up to 9 weeks of pregnancy.

2018



The 1800 My Options phonenumber and information service was launched in 2018, funded by the Victorian State Government. We've since supported 20,000 Victorians, answering questions about contraception, pregnancy options, abortion and sexual health, and linking them to nearly 500 sexual and reproductive health services.

2020



COVID-19 pandemic restrictions resulted in the increased availability of telehealth - phone and video consults - within the sexual and reproductive health sector. This offers patients greater access and convenience.

While we have come a long way, there is still lots of work to be done to support accessible and safe abortion care. To find out more about the global campaign for abortion rights, go to www.september28.org