

Public consultation on pro-life presence outside abortion clinics

Amber Rudd, the Home Secretary has now launched a public consultation on pro-life groups' presence outside abortion clinics. The consultation, entitled, "Abortion Clinic Protest Review", applies to England and Wales only and invites "All members of the public or organisations, who have experience of protest activity outside abortion clinics...to contribute evidence to the review."

Why is there a public consultation?

For several months we have drawn attention to ongoing calls from Marie Stopes, BPAS, various local councils, and MP Rupa Huq (Labour, Ealing Central) for buffer zones that would ban any pro-life presence from outside abortion clinics.

Accusations that pro-life groups intimidate, harass, and abuse pregnant women have been made in several cases, but at no point has any evidence been presented. What's more, no arrests or charges have been made, though current powers and legislation exists to protect people from harassment, intimidation, and abuse. The public consultation aims to review evidence from all parties and will assess whether to introduce further legislation that could potentially redefine 'harassment' and ban freedom of speech and [even religious expression](#) from near the confines of Britain's abortion clinics.

Amber Rudd's public consultation is an opportunity for the government to hear the truth about pro-life witness outside abortion clinics. Far from hurting women, it has helped. The Good Counsel Network knows of 3000 babies delivered by their mothers as a direct result of their pavement counselling outside abortion centres. 40 Days for Life has recorded over 13,000 babies saved as the result of their own abortion clinic outreaches in the past 10 years.

Who should respond?

The consultation is public and so is open to everyone. It is for you, to take responsibility and stand up for pro-life groups that pray and provide counsel to women in crisis, giving them an alternative choice to abortion.

If you or someone you know has or continues to take part in pro-life activities – whether protest, counselling, or prayer vigils outside abortion facilities – please respond to the government consultation as a matter of priority.

Though experience of pro-life activity outside abortion clinics holds more weight in considering evidence, this is not required to make a submission. If you truly care about the

safety and well-being of pre-born infants and their mothers, this is one way in which you can make your voice heard.

Why should you respond?

- There is a lack of evidence given against pro-life groups involved in counselling outside abortion clinics. Justice must be upheld against the pro-abortion lobby's dishonesty.
- Many women have been helped by groups such as Good Counsel Network, 40 Days for Life, and Abort67. Buffer zones will make such help offered outside clinics illegal and in most cases, impossible.
- Existing powers against harassment and intimidating behaviour are in place and can be used if necessary, but Good Counsel Network, 40 Days For Life, and Abort67 who are most involved outside UK abortion clinics have not been involved in such behaviour.
- Calls to install buffer zones, excluding even those people involved in silent prayer are an infringement of freedom of expression and religion.

When should you respond?

The threats outlined above are very real and time is of the essence. The deadline for final submissions to the Home Office review is **19 February 2018**. We ask that you respond as soon as possible to the consultation.

Act now!

You can find and complete the questionnaire using your own words online by [clicking here](#).

Alternatively, you can write of your own experience of pro-life witness outside abortion clinics and post it to Abortion Clinic Protest Review Team, Police Powers Unit, Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF.

If you considered abortion and were convinced to keep your child by a pro-life counsellor outside an abortion clinic or if you have had an abortion and regret it, wishing that you had been approached by someone offering an alternative choice, **your witness would be particularly valuable**. Please also consider contacting us to tell your story.

Spread the word!

Please forward this document to anyone who may be interested. If you have questions or need help in making your submission to the review please contact Regan King at regan.king@christianconcern.com or on 020 3327 1120.