

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Olga Estridge, John Quelch, John Forster,  
Gerardine Christou, Sue Culligan

FROM: Jenny Trethewey

DATE: March 18th, 1993

RE: Family planning clinics

-----

I am writing on behalf of the Brotherhood to Marie Tehan, Minister for Health and Community Services, to protest the closure of family planning clinics. Do you have additional points, comments to include from your services' perspectives?

March 18th, 1993

The Hon. Marie Tehan  
Minister for Health and Community Services

Dear Minister,

**Re: Closure of Family Planning Clinics**

The Brotherhood of St Laurence has a particular interest in family planning services having established a pilot family planning clinic for low income families in 1967 and having recommended on the basis of this that in 1970 the State Government accept responsibility for the provision of family planning services for low income groups.

We are extremely concerned that the closure of clinics and reliance on general practitioners will exclude vulnerable women from assistance and advice on birth control, sexually transmitted diseases and cervical and breast cancer checks. For instance, many young women feel more confident about seeking advice from a family planning clinic than their family GP. And many women from non-English speaking backgrounds appreciate the ready access to female doctors which family planning clinics provide.

Whilst we appreciate the difficult budgetary position of the Victorian Government, we urge you to rethink this decision and continue to fund the clinics. Their vital contribution to women's health and the prevention of poverty through unplanned pregnancies were the reasons the Brotherhood pioneered these services.

Yours sincerely,

**ALISON McCLELLAND**  
Director  
Social Policy and Research

JT:klb