

MEDIA RELEASE

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



New report examines legalities of male circumcision

The Tasmanian Law Reform Institute (TLRI) today released Final Report No 17 on the legal framework in Tasmania which governs the practice of non-therapeutic male circumcision.

The report, *Non-Therapeutic Male Circumcision*, gives background on the issue of male circumcision, examines the current law in Tasmania and other international jurisdictions and offers recommendations for reform of the law.

The TLRI produced an issues paper entitled *Non-Therapeutic Male Circumcision* in 2009 seeking public views on the merits of the current legal framework.

Professor Kate Warner, Director of the TLRI, said the paper generated much interest and 126 submissions were received not only from Tasmania and other Australian states but from international respondents as well.

“Analysis of the legal position reveals that the law is uncertain as to whether non-therapeutic infant male circumcision is lawful,” Prof Warner said.

“In the interests of certainty the Institute recommends that the law be clarified.”

The report makes a series of recommendations. These include:

- A general prohibition on the circumcision of incapable minors with an exception for well-established religious or ethnicity motivated circumcisions.
- Enactment of legislation clarifying the legality of circumcisions performed at the request of an adult or a capable minor and governing situations where parents disagree about the desirability of performing a circumcision.
- Greater dissemination of accurate information on the known and potential effects and significance of circumcision.
- The imposition of criminal sanctions for a circumciser who fails to meet minimum standards of care: and
- Setting of a uniform limitations period in which individuals can bring an action against their circumciser and extending the limitations period for individuals harmed by circumcisions as a minor.

The report is available on the Institute's webpage:
<http://www.law.utas.edu.au/reform/>

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