



## World Health Organization Demands An End To ALL Time Limits On Abortions

### Description

**The World Health Organization (WHO) is demanding that governments around the world scrap the legal time limit on abortions.**

The world's most influential health organization has issued new guidelines claiming laws that prevent abortion at any point during pregnancy risk violating the rights of *'women, girls or other pregnant persons'*.

The United Nations has welcomed the suggested removal of what it called 'unnecessary policy barriers to safe abortion', including 'limits on when an abortion can take place'.

The [Mail Online](#) reports: But last night Tory MP Fiona Bruce, co-chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Pro-Life Group, described any proposal to legalise abortion up to birth as 'completely unacceptable' and 'truly shocking'.

She added: 'A viable human being could have his or her life ended up to the point of birth. Yet a day, an hour, even moments later, similar action against a child could constitute murder.'

The WHO's 'Abortion Care Guideline' published this month – six years after the MoS revealed the Royal College of Midwives was pushing for the same policy – also recommends that governments:

- Allow abortion under all circumstances – ruling out laws banning terminations because the foetus is the 'wrong' sex;
- Stop women requiring approval from a doctor or nurse to have a termination; I
- Roll out 'pills by post' schemes so that women can be sent abortion medication after a phone call;
- Curtail medical professionals' rights to refuse to take part in abortions on conscience grounds.

The United Nations, which oversees the WHO, has welcomed the suggested removal of what it called 'unnecessary policy barriers to safe abortion', including 'limits on when an abortion can take place'.

But nowhere in the 210-page document is there mention of the ethical debate about the rights of the unborn child, nor if abortions are morally acceptable when after 22-24 weeks the foetus has a good chance of surviving if born prematurely.

It is also silent on sex-selective abortion, despite the termination of female fetuses being common in countries such as India, Pakistan and China.

Prior to publication, the WHO consulted a panel of 12 'external experts' including Dr Dhammika Perera, global medical director of UK-based Marie Stopes International, whose British arm carries out more than 60,000 NHS abortions a year, and Dr Laura Castleman, of Planned Parenthood Michigan, a branch of the largest abortion provider in the United States.

Dr Perera has previously described terms such as late-term abortion and foetal heartbeat as 'anti-choice rhetoric'.

He also objects to the word 'womb' because it 'assigns emotional and symbolic value to an organ'.

Another member of the panel was Karthik Srinivasan from the International Planned Parenthood Federation, which lobbies to expand abortion rights.

Christina Zampas, of the global Center for Reproductive Rights, which uses donations to 'build, enforce, [and] defend' abortion, advised on human rights law.

The WHO document recommends 'full decriminalisation of abortion' and the scrapping of laws and regulations that 'prohibit abortion based on gestational limits' and 'restrict abortion' on any grounds.

It says a review of 21 studies found that when women are denied later terminations it 'can be viewed as [being] incompatible with... international human rights law'.

It adds that time limits on abortion might also breach equality laws because they have a 'disproportionate impact' on some groups, such as teenagers and the poor.

In England and Wales women can have abortions for 'social' reasons up to 24 weeks.

After that, they are only legally permitted in circumstances such as the mother's life being at risk or if the child would be born with a severe disability.

The Royal College of Midwives called for the 'decriminalisation' of abortion, including scrapping time limits, in 2016.

The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists followed in 2017 and the Royal College of General Practitioners in 2019.

**by Niamh Harris**

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