

21<sup>st</sup> July 2013

Attorney General's Department  
Ms Cathy Rainsford  
Principal Legal Officer – Family Law Branch  
3-5 National Circuit  
Barton. ACT 2600

cc: The Honourable Justice Strickland – Family Law Court of Australia  
The Honourable Justice Loughnan – Family Law Court of Australia  
Mr Barry O'Farrell - NSW Premier  
Mr Greg Smith - NSW Attorney-General  
The Hon Tanya Plibersek MP – Commonwealth Health Minister  
Mr David Clarke MLC – NSW Parliamentary Secretary for Justice  
Mr Warwick Marshall - Tasmanian Law Reform Institute  
Ms Megan Mitchell - NSW Commissioner for Children and Young People  
Ms Lou-Anne Lind - NSW Commission for Children and Young People  
Ms Camilla Pandolsini – Senior Solicitor, Public Interest Advocacy Centre  
Ms Kate McClymont – Sydney Morning Herald  
Mr Paul Mason – Barrister  
Mr Robert Darby  
Dr George Williams - Paediatrician  
Ms Justine McKay – NSW Health Care Complaints Commission  
Mr Bob Brown – Former Senator  
Dr Jennifer Alexander CEO, RACP  
Dr Jacqueline Small - RACP

NSW Govt ref: IM11/3346 File10/005444 Matter11/003630  
AG10/06518 File 10/005444 Matter 10/007258  
AG12/01713 File 10/005444 Matter 12/001047  
M10/6577 eA1613153

NSW HCCC ref: 10/02194

AHRC ref: 209224FD:BJ

Your ref: AG-MC11/13774

Good morning Ms Rainsford,

I have written to you and many other politicians and bureaucrats previously regarding the circumcision of my son without either medical reason or my consent in 2010. At the time of his non-medically indicated circumcision my little boy was six weeks old. My son was healthy and perfect in every measurable way prior to his circumcision.

All previous correspondence to you and others can be found at [MyCircumcisionDisgrace.org](http://MyCircumcisionDisgrace.org). Well over 10,000 unique IP addresses have now visited my website. The most viewed correspondence is my letter to you of the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2012.

I remain determined, **absolutely determined**, that the unfairness and loss that visited my son and I should at the very least result in better protection for parents and infants that follow. As I promised Ms Gillard, one way or another I will have this issue brought to a head.

Over the last nearly three years I have received many, many emails from people visiting my website.

Most simply assure me that my rage is justified and offer a hope that things might change.

A small number of people have recanted sad personal experiences.

One mother to be, for example, contacted me last year. She was expecting a baby boy and the issue of circumcision had been hotly debated between her husband and herself. Without agreement being reached, the debate one day suddenly ended. Her initial contact to me was made shortly thereafter, following her finding my website in the family computer's search history. She quickly became convinced that her husband had stumbled onto my website while exploring the issue of consent. Before reading my son's and my story, she had been absolutely unaware that her consent was not required in order for her son to be circumcised. My last note from her was in October 2012, where she indicated that in order to protect her as yet unborn son from circumcision she had decided to leave her family home to give birth in Melbourne, staying with friends that were not known to her husband.

What a triumph of public policy Ms Rainsford, one that everyone concerned must be so proud to be a part of.

And what an abject failure on my behalf; not only have I been totally unsuccessful in having the consent procedures surrounding infant male circumcision improved, it seems that my website may have been used as a textbook to show people who harbor ill-intent how meaningless the current regime is.

The most recent contact is attached. This matter is apparently to go before the Family Law Court and the mother concerned has asked that I remove even her first name, fearful that exposure might work against her case in some way. No doubt as the case progresses it will become a matter of public record. Regardless of the outcome of any court action, her son's circumcision is sadly permanent as is her lack of consent to it. You'll note that the doctor in this instance claims to have "*thought the mother was there*", as if such a childlike, arcane plea should somehow grant absolution or clemency.

I'm sure everyone will also have a good laugh at the pathetic impotence of the hapless little boy telling his mother that "*he wants his old one back*". Hilarious.

You'll no doubt be amazed to hear that the mother involved reacted in much the same way as I did when I informed her that, so far as the government and doctors are concerned, she should quietly accept that the circumcision of her little boy was none of her business.

These sad and ridiculous outcomes, as well as others that I am probably not aware of, would not have been possible had action been taken on the back of my son's and my story. Similarly, my son would have been spared his mutilation had action been taken following similar situations that predated his appointment with his circumciser.

Self evidently, simply recanting my story has been spectacularly unsuccessful in either changing the way that non-medically indicated infant male circumcision is viewed generally or revamping the dismally inadequate consent regime attached to it. I now accept that no one within government sees any reason to act, quickly or otherwise, and that doctors are to continue to enjoy carte blanche rights to behave as they like in this area.

Even to the most inane it should be obvious that I DO NOT accept the right of a professional guild, be they doctors or plumbers, to pontificate over what rights I may or may not be extended when it comes to protecting my son from harm.

Similarly, I do not accept the right of my government to enact laws, without good cause or reason, that can be interpreted to negate one of my most basic rights; my right to protect my son from harm.

Without either medical imperative or my consent my son should not have been touched and I am deaf to attempted justifications that argue otherwise.

As I should have concluded nearly three years ago, the non-medically indicated circumcision of my little boy without my consent is an issue that I need to discuss with the doctor in question privately.

Yours sincerely,

Hi Peter,

Thank you for your reply. I was directed to your site by my mother who has been busy writing to and visiting local politicians. I will be speaking to her later today and will ask for the names of the people she has had contact with and who told her about your site.

My children live with me and only spend a few hours a month with their father. The fact that he was able to make a life changing decision for a child that has never even spent the night at his house or shared a meal with is unbelievable.

This issue is now in the family court so i'm not sure how much information i can provide. I want to share my story with you and help you but please be discreet with my details as i don't want to hurt my case in court.

The police could not do anything because no laws were broken, however the child protection unit paid me a visit because they wanted to make sure i was taking this to family court as it was really the only thing that could be done.

The doctor involved was horrified. My husband took his friends with him and the doctor thought the mother was there and claims he would not have performed the surgery if he had known that i was against it. That is not much help to anyone, they should demand both parents signatures even if legally they only need one. But they didn't.

The next morning we took my son to our doctors and they sent us to the hospital. They involved their child protection unit, but again, nothing we could do legally, although they too were horrified and gave me much advice and support, the head of the child protection unit offered to speak for me in court. They also wanted me to sue my ex husband on behalf of my son. Their main issue was that it was done behind the back of the parent that has 100% care of the children.

The hospital told me they would be making a formal complaint against the doctor who performed the surgery. I don't know what happened here but after i have dealt with our family court situation i might follow up on that.

Mediation attempts failed so we went to court, our case was rushed through in 2 1/2 weeks. My ex did not appear as they hadn't been able to serve him. I now have temporary sole parental responsibility but have to wait a month for the next hearing because of the seriousness of the allegations.

So while no one has actually been able to do anything because of the law, they have tried to help and taken the issue very seriously. I know my situation is very different to yours but i would still like to offer you support and help in any way i can. Laws need to change.

My son is 4, was awake for the procedure and spent 2 weeks of agony with that plastibell attached, and another week of agony after it finally fell/tore off his penis as it healed. It is still very sensitive and he hates it, he wants his old one back, unfortunately i can't fix this for him and it breaks my heart. He is too young to understand fully what happened to him, but too old to ever forget.

I will speak to my mother and send you some more information on the progress she is making also.

Thanks