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**For Immediate Release**

**NCCWN Call on Government to ease COVID-19 Restrictions in Maternity Services**

The National Collective of Community based Women's Networks is calling on the Government to ease COVID-19 restrictions in maternity services and allow birthing partners to be present at all pregnancy related appointments, scans, full labour and births as soon as possible.

This request has come on foot of many of the 17 NCCWN projects nationally being contacted by upset and vulnerable pregnant people being left completely alone during their pregnancy appointments, labour and in some cases giving birth with no support. There have also been instances where people have had to receive the devastating news that their pregnancy is not viable and have had to miscarry without a loved one present. NCCWN staff, who work on the ground with women experiencing multiple forms of marginalisation and disadvantage, are incredibly concerned for the wellbeing of anyone currently pregnant or who becomes pregnant in the near future and is left with the added stress and fear of having no support when engaging with maternity services.

Additionally, NCCWN are asking concerned members of the public to get involved in their letter writing campaign and contact their local TDs via post or email to let them know that this treatment of pregnant people is unjust and will no longer be tolerated. Information on this campaign and a template letter can be found on the [NCCWN website](#) and on their social media platforms.

**National Coordinator of NCCWN, Miriam Holt**, said, "We, like most of the country, watched the Government launch their Plan for Living with COVID-19 and were dismayed to

see that pregnant people and maternity services were not included or mentioned once. It is unacceptable to expect pregnant people to attend each of their appointments and start their labour completely alone. We are especially concerned for first time parents, women who may be extra vulnerable such as; those who do not speak English, are from ethnic minorities and anyone with medical or underlying conditions. We are calling on the Government to ease restrictions and allow birthing partners to be a part of the entire experience and we are asking if members of the public feel the same to please join this campaign and contact their local political representatives and let them know.”

**A pregnant woman who contacted the Limerick branch of NCCWN and wants to remain anonymous said,** “I have been incredibly cautious all throughout COVID-19 and I don’t mind following the rules and keeping people safe but when people can go to pubs and restaurants and socialise but I, a first time mother, am forced to go to all of my scans and appointments alone, it is quite upsetting and unfair. My partner has been totally side-lined from the whole experience, I have lost that support and as a result I feel anxious and vulnerable.”

A template letter can be found on the NCCWN website [www.nccwn.org](http://www.nccwn.org) and via their social media platforms. NCCWN are hopeful that members of the public will step up and join them in this important campaign.

***ENDS***

***For further information contact:***

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**About NCCWN:**

The vision of the NCCWN is a just and equal society for women.

The National Collective of Community Based Women’s Networks (NCCWN) works nationally and locally through its 17 Women’s Community Development Projects based around the country and 47 staff.

The mission of the NCCWN is to empower and support community-based women who experience disadvantage and marginalisation as a result of barriers to participation and lack of opportunities. This will be achieved by our women’s projects bringing about positive and sustainable changes to their lives and society using collective action and feminist approaches, with an emphasis on policy and challenging structures, attitudes and behaviours that marginalise women.

NCCWN Social media: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#).