Written submission from a member of the public (ANI0441)

"My personal experience affected by abortion laws in Northern Ireland: I am a 27 year old male. Two years ago I found myself in a position where a friend that I had slept with told me that she was pregnant. There was no doubt in the situation, neither her nor I were in a position to go through with the pregnancy. From there we discussed options which included traveling to England for an abortion or contacting charities online to have abortion pills sent to us. Unfortunately this decision was made for us due to the cost of traveling to obtain an abortion and employers that might not be forgiving enough to give us the time off. This left us with the great uncertainty of having to use abortion pills. Without any real understanding of how they worked or what the process might be like we put our faith in the not-for-profit organisations for which we had no faces to attach, no kind voices of reassurance, no doctorates in medicine hanging on the wall. This procedure would be carried out in a living room. From the living room, we moved to the bedroom when the painful contractions began. More pain than was expected led to a panic. "Try to hold out a little longer" I said, knowing that to go to the hospital might arouse suspicion and could put her in serious legal trouble. Eventually after the agony persisted for a number of hours the decision was made to call a taxi. In the hospital, just as when we went to get a scan to confirm the foetus was still young enough to be aborted safely, we received the reception of a young couple who were starting a family. We kept up this charade to receive the medical treatment needed and eventually to be informed that she had had a miscarriage. This traumatic experience with no follow up care available has left a lasting mark on both of us. To overcome a situation like that one in silence is slow and painful.

This particular corner of the United Kingdom has a cruel and unusual process of healthcare. It makes criminals of victims and creates a network of lies amongst fellow citizens for fear of facing truths that we should all be sharing.

My friends/family/colleagues view on abortion: I don’t know anyone who believes an outright ban is a safe or humane solution.

An example of how views on abortion have moved on:

What should the UK govt. do?: Recognise the immediate danger that the women of Northern Ireland are in and take action to provide a British standard of care for all it’s citizens.

Why is devolution not a barrier?:"

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