

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Embargoed until 00.01 Thursday 1 October**

### **Women still fighting to make choices in childbirth say Birthrights, in response to new caesarean guideline**

Commenting on the new Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists' guideline on vaginal birth after caesarean section (VBAC), published today (1 October 2015), Rebecca Schiller (co-chair of the human rights in childbirth charity [Birthrights](http://Birthrights.org.uk)) said,

"Birthrights welcomes the new guideline on vaginal birth after caesarean section, which makes it clear that women have a range of choices available to them when giving birth after a previous caesarean section.

Sadly women let us know that they often have to fight to secure support for their decisions after a previous caesarean; whether that is to request an elective caesarean, plan a vaginal birth after more than one caesarean or use water for pain relief during a VBAC. Despite evidence and guidance women still struggle to have their autonomy respected during pregnancy and birth.

It is clear from this guidance that women's individual circumstances and preferences should be central to decision making and that they should have access to the evidence so that they can make these decisions with the support of their clinicians.

Services need to be designed to ensure women's decisions can be supported and compassionate, respectful care provided at all times"

ENDS

For further information please email [press@birthrights.org.uk](mailto:press@birthrights.org.uk) or call 07793084945

#### **Notes to Editors**

Birthrights is the UK's only organisation dedicated to improving women's experience of pregnancy and childbirth by promoting respect for human rights. We believe that all women are entitled to respectful maternity care that protects their fundamental rights to dignity, autonomy, privacy and equality. We aspire to advance the human rights and lawful treatment of all child-bearing women.



## What we do:

- Provide free, accurate and accessible legal information and advice on human rights and the law relating to childbearing women.
- Campaign on respect for women's rights in childbirth as fundamental human rights that maternity-service providers are legally obliged to respect and fulfil.
- Offer advice, assistance and training to caregivers, professional or otherwise.

Birthrights promotes women's right to receive evidence-based care that conforms to the best medical and midwifery standards. We do not hold views on clinical issues arising in maternity care.

Birthrights is a charitable incorporated organisation. Our registered charity number is 1151152.

You can read more about our work on our [website](#) and read our press coverage [here](#).

