

# Let women take abortion medication at home permanently, says NSS

Posted: Thu, 4th Mar 2021

The National Secular Society has said measures allowing women to have early medical abortions at home during the coronavirus pandemic should be made permanent across Britain.

A UK government consultation on the home use of abortion pills in England closed last week, as did a Welsh government consultation on termination of pregnancy arrangements. A similar consultation in Scotland closed in January.

[In response to the consultations the NSS said](#) religious ideology "should not be permitted to determine healthcare policies" and ministers' "primary consideration" should be "the safety and welfare of women seeking abortion services".

The NSS noted that most objections to early medical abortions at home and remote consultations "come from those who ideologically oppose abortion under all circumstances, and seek to make it harder for women to access abortion services".

The society highlighted several benefits of continuing to allow abortion medication to be taken at home, including that:

- It would make it easier for women and girls from religious communities which disapprove of abortion to access it.
- It would help to support confidentiality, and mean fewer women would need to face anti-choice protesters outside abortion clinics.

## Mini-pill consultation response

The NSS has also responded to a further consultation on whether to allow the supply of Hana and Lovima tablets – commonly known as the mini-pill – in pharmacies.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, which regulates medicines in the UK, has proposed the move.

The NSS's response again said the health and wellbeing of patients should be the primary consideration and noted experts' views that the pills are very safe.

The society also said the measure would make it easier for women and girls from religious communities which disapprove of contraception to access it.

## NSS comment

NSS head of policy and research Megan Manson said: "Ministers should ensure people from all backgrounds and communities can access safe, timely, non-judgmental healthcare. That includes abortion care and sexual health counselling and treatment.

"Many of the objections to the proposals under consideration in these consultations are either explicitly religious or rooted in religious ideology. Making it easier for women to safely access abortion and contraception would help to show that their rights are not subject to a religious veto."

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