



THE SOUTH AFRICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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Mr A Fabre
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Per fax: 088 021 461 7961

Dear Mr Fabre

SAMA POLICY STATEMENT ON ROUTINE INFANT CIRCUMCISION

Thank you for your email addressed to Ms Maliga Pillay of the SAMA Human Rights Law and Ethics Department, requesting for a SAMA Policy Statement on Routine Infant Circumcision.

The matter was discussed at the meeting of the Education Science and Technology Committee held on 28 January 2005. Below is an extract of the of the minutes of that meeting:

"The Committee NOTED the following: -

1. The contents of the e-mail message, together with annexures, on Routine Infant Circumcision received from the National Organisation of Circumcision Information Resource Centres – South Africa (NOCIRC-SA);
2. That NOCIRC-SA would make a presentation to Parliament on the draft Childrens Bill in due course on, *inter alia*, the relevant provision in the Bill which protected only minor girls from non-medically justified genital modification but minor boys did not enjoy the same legal protection;
3. NOCIRC-SA indicated that they obtained Policies and Statements from several National Medical Associations from which none advocated the practice of circumcision or any other genital surgeries on boys or girls, without a valid medical diagnosis;
4. NOCIRC-SA requested an official Statement from SAMA on the subject matter.

The Committee was also INFORMED of the following extract on Cultural Circumcisions, which emanated from the SAMA Human Rights, Law and Ethics Committee meeting held on 6 November 2004, namely: -

"At present there appeared to be two schools of thought to justify circumcisions. The one was for medical reasons and the well-being of the patient, whilst the other was based on religious and traditional grounds. The latter appeared to create problems since it was

TKS Letlape (Chairperson), DAC White (Vice-Chairperson), J Terblanche (President), MI Mogari (Secretary General)

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