

# What is a fatal foetal anomaly?



Sometimes a woman will be told that her developing baby is likely to die before or shortly after birth. This is often referred to as a fatal foetal anomaly or fatal foetal abnormality. A woman will experience a wide range of complex emotions when told of such a profound problem with her pregnancy. In these circumstances a woman needs support from her family and doctor to make a decision to continue with her pregnancy or end it before term. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists recommends that following the decision to end a pregnancy due to foetal anomaly, women should be offered the choice of either medical or surgical termination. Both options are safe and effective, and have no effect on subsequent pregnancies.

Currently in Ireland doctors cannot support women to end their pregnancies in such difficult circumstances. A woman who decides to end her pregnancy following such a diagnosis must travel abroad to seek care from doctors that she has never met before.

## **If the public vote yes**

This would allow health professionals to care for women in sometimes extremely difficult and distressing circumstances and support women, couples and families in making the decision that is right for them and their personal circumstances.

