On 25 May 2018 citizens of the Republic of Ireland voted to enable abortion legislation, modelled on the laws of France and Great Britain but in some respects more permissive than abortion law in either country.

What becomes legal does not thereby become ethical, and healthcare professionals in Ireland will very soon face significant ethical challenges in order to avoid complicity with unjust and medically harmful practices. This change in the law will occur at a time when the scope and prevalence of eugenic abortion has never been greater and when the rights of conscience of healthcare professionals are increasingly under threat worldwide. The Anscombe Centre regularly offers advice to healthcare professionals who simply want to protect and respect their patients but are put under pressure to be complicit in practices that are the very reverse of medicine.

It is also important at this time to acknowledge the historic achievement of healthcare services in Ireland over the past fifty years. While protecting the lives of unborn children, Ireland has sustained a level of maternal health equal to or better than that in Great Britain or France. Ireland is also a welcoming society for disabled children, and the world has much to learn from current Irish practice when it comes to respecting pregnant women and their babies.