

Gender-based abortions spark outrage in England

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CANTERBURY, England (RNS) A group of Christian lawyers plans to sue two medical doctors who have raised a storm of controversy for arranging the abortion of female fetuses because the parents wanted boys.

Andrea Williams, CEO of the London-based Christian Concern, said her group would file suit against the doctors since the government declined to charge them.

In an Oct. 7 letter to the attorney general, Director of Public Prosecutions Keir Starmer said the Abortion Act of 1967 “does not expressly prohibit gender specific abortions.”

Starmer said the only basis for a prosecution would be that the doctors failed to carry out “a sufficiently robust assessment” of their patient’s health.

Disclosures that women were being granted abortions based on the sex of their fetuses followed an undercover investigation by the Daily Telegraph in February last year.

The media group secretly filmed doctors agreeing to terminate fetuses for sex selection purposes.

Responses to the media reports were swift.

“I am extremely concerned to hear about these allegations,” said Andrew Lansley, a former health secretary. “Sex selection is illegal and is morally wrong. I’ve asked my officials to investigate this as a matter of urgency.”

On Oct. 9, a one-day debate on the subject was held in Parliament. David Burrowes, a Conservative Parliament member, told colleagues that “gendercide” is now a worldwide issue.

Referring to Starmer’s decision not to prosecute the two doctors, Burrowes said the 1967 Abortion Act needed clarification.

“There is a lack of transparent information and no real safeguards,” he said. “It is up to Parliament to deal with that.”

In a statement Oct.10, a spokesperson for the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales said: “People are right to be outraged that some parents are seeking to use abortion as a means of gender selection. It is the worst form of discrimination to kill a baby because she is the ‘wrong’ gender.”