

## June 24th, 2022: once a right is obtained, it can no longer be lost!

### Text

24 June 2022 was a historic day of defeat for women's rights to healthcare. It was a devastating day for professionals like us who work for women's health rights and for the women we serve. During the recent COVID-19 pandemic we fought to keep safe abortion accessible. Moreover, with ongoing conflicts, economic and humanitarian crises raging across the world, people are fighting to keep abortion accessible. We are choked and in disbelief that the decision by the Supreme Court of the United States of America (USA) allows bans of abortion [1]. Abortion has always been, and will most likely always remain, a fundamental part of women's healthcare.

Safe abortion will be illegal, or soon to be, in as many as 16 US states with *Roe v. Wade* overturned. Access to the full spectrum of medical care, including safe abortion, is essential for people's health, safety, and wellbeing. A ban on abortion not only affects women. It affects partners and children born as a result of unwanted or mistimed pregnancies or who are born with severe birth defects. The Turn Away study demonstrates many negative impacts from lack of access to abortion [2]; women trapped in abusive relationships and their children growing up in an unsafe environment. Women end up with their goals in life frustrated and facing greater poverty. Thus, banning abortion has generational and wider societal effects. Decisions regarding abortion should be made by women in consultation with their health care providers and without undue interference by outside parties. Like all patients, women obtaining abortion are entitled to privacy, dignity, respect, and support.

'The European Society of Contraception and Reproductive Health' and 'The European Journal of Contraception and Reproductive Health Care' extend all necessary support to 'The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists', the 'Society of Family Planning' and the 'National Abortion Federation' and any other entity working to provide safe abortion care in the US and beyond. We will work to connect, engage, and advocate unrestricted access to safe abortion at all levels.

We are seriously concerned about women's health in the US and we know from previous examples in history that banning abortion does not lower rates of abortion. It simply adds to inequalities and endangers women lives. The maternal mortality rate is already comparatively high the US and, moreover, on the rise. We fear that this decision will aggravate the situation. Banning abortion is simply not worthy of a modern democracy. The evidence is clear.

### Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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### References

- [1] <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2022/06/24/supreme-court-abortion-ruling/>.
- [2] <https://www.ansirh.org/research/ongoing/turnaway-study>.

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