

Abortion care is fundamental health care

Statement from Physicians for a National Health Program

On June 24, 2022, the Supreme Court announced its decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, which effectively ends all federal protections for abortion care. As a result, about half the states in the U.S. will like restrict or fully ban abortion care.

Besides robbing women of their fundamental right to autonomy and self-determination, criminalizing abortion will unleash a once-in-a-generation public health crisis.

Abortion care is necessary health care, and banning it will cause unnecessary suffering and death, especially for our most vulnerable patients. In states that criminalize abortion, PNHP estimates that **maternal mortality will increase up to 15% overall, and up to 33% for people of color.**

The evidence is clear: In one [study](#), states that enacted abortion restrictions based on gestational age saw maternal mortality increase by 38%. Yet another [study](#) found that states that enacted the most restrictive abortion laws saw their maternal mortality rates nearly double compared to states that protected abortion access.

It's no coincidence that after decades of improvement, American maternal mortality rates started going up at the same time that many states began restricting access to abortion. Today, the rate of pregnancy-related deaths in the U.S. has nearly [tripled](#) compared to 30 years ago, with Black women nearly [three times](#) as likely to die from pregnancy and childbirth than whites.

PNHP believes that abortion is *essential health care*, and should be available to all women regardless of income or location. As physicians and health justice advocates, **we cannot sit on the sidelines while patients are denied essential medical services, forced to give birth, or compelled to risk their lives and health obtaining illegal abortion care.**

Today we must fight for state and [national legislation](#) protecting every person's right to abortion care, including overturning the Hyde Amendment. And, we must fight even harder for a future where all health care — including reproductive care and abortion — is provided without cost or legal barriers to every single person living in the U.S.

We must also support the organizations that are at the forefront of these struggles, especially those providing essential abortion care where it is needed most. These include, but are not limited to, [Whole Womans' Health Alliance](#), the [Miscarriage and Abortion Hotline](#), [West Fund](#), and [Plan C](#).

Health care decisions should be made between a patient and their doctor, and nobody else. Please join us in the fight to protect the choice for all women to be able to access essential abortion care in this country.

