

AWHONN Strengthens Position Statement on Health Care Decision Making for Reproductive Care

The Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) believes that reproductive health care decisions should take place between the well-informed patient and the licensed health care clinician. These personal and private decisions are implemented within a health care system whose clinicians respect the patient's right to make informed decisions based upon their personal values and preferences.

Universal equitable access to the full spectrum of sexual and reproductive health services is a fundamental right and central to the wellbeing of individuals and communities (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022). Therefore, AWHONN supports and promotes a person's right to evidence-based, accurate and thorough information, access to all available reproductive health care services, and the right to make choices that meet their individual needs.

AWHONN opposes legislation and policies that limit, prohibit, or puts a healthcare clinician at risk for criminal prosecution or civil litigation based on the following:

- Counseling and educating individuals on the comprehensive range of reproductive care options, treatment and/or referrals as requested by the patient or health care clinician.
- Making informed decisions based on individual choice for any reproductive healthcare need or treatment (e.g., contraception and abortion).
- Accessing comprehensive reproductive health care options for patients (e.g., abortion).
- Accessing payment options for comprehensive reproductive healthcare options for patients (e.g., abortion).

References

Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (2020). AWHONN position statement: Health care decision making for reproductive care. *Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic, and Neonatal Nursing*, 49 (1), E1.

World Health Organization. (2022). Abortion care guidelines. Geneva. ISBN-13: 978-92-4-003949-0

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