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Health Workforce Pilot Project



The Health Workforce Pilot Project trained certified nurse-midwives, nurse practitioners and physician assistants in abortion care and provision at clinics across California.

[Project summary](#) | [HWPP #171 Analysis](#)

Part of the [Primary Care Initiative](#), the Health Workforce Pilot Project (HWPP) #171 is a California-based, multi-site, six-year study of advanced practice clinicians—nurse practitioners (NPs), certified nurse-midwives (CNMs), and physician assistants (PAs)—as providers of early aspiration abortion care. Operating under a mechanism of the [California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development](#) (OSHPD), HWPP #171 is a pilot project of nearly 50 NPs, CNMs, and PAs who are trained in abortion care and provision at health facilities around the state using ANSIRH's [Early Abortion Training Workbook](#).

The HWPP #171 training plan consists of didactic education and “hands on” clinical experience, along with knowledge testing and periodic clinical assessment with the goal to train NPs, CNMs, and PAs to competence in all aspects of early aspiration abortion care. Each trainee completes didactic and clinical training to competency standards in first-trimester aspiration abortion under the supervision of a physician trainer at a designated training site. The physician trainers are experienced providers currently offering abortion services at an institution participating in the project and have received formal “train-the-trainer” instruction prior to training NPs, CNMs, and PAs at their own institution.

[Learn more about the HWPP Curriculum and Core Competencies Guidelines.](#)

HWPP #171 was designed to answer two questions: can NPs, CNMs, and PAs be trained to competence in aspiration abortion? And can they perform those procedures with comparable outcomes as their physician counterparts? The answer: YES.

The results of this pilot project are being made available to the California legislature, health professional organizations, and state regulating bodies to promote evidenced-based legal and regulatory decision-making in regards to the provisions of abortion care by NPs, CNMs and PAs. The results are also being shared with reproductive health advocates nationwide to expand the pool of abortion providers to include all clinicians with appropriate education, training and skill.

HWPP #171 Analysis

HWPP #171 collected data from almost 20,000 patients and trained nearly 50 NPs, CNMs, and PAs to competency in aspiration abortion care. Currently in the final year of the project, ANSIRH’s HWPP Project staff are in the process of analyzing and publishing the training and practice evaluation data on the safety and effectiveness of NPs, CNMs, and PAs as abortion providers.

Study results confirm:

- NPs/CNMs/PAs can provide early abortion care that is clinically as safe as physicians
- NPs/CNMs/PAs can be successfully trained to competence in aspiration abortion care
- Outpatient abortion is very safe, whether performed by a NP/CNM/PA or a physician
- Patients report high satisfaction during their abortion experience whether they are seen by a NP/CNM/PA or a physician

For a look at findings, please review the [HWPP Study Results](#) and read the study’s [published articles](#).

As a result of HWPP #171’s findings, [Assembly Bill 154](#) (AB154) was introduced and passed in the California legislature in October 2013. AB154 removes barriers to abortion provision for NPs, CNMs, and PAs allowing them to be trained and able to provide first-trimester aspiration abortion care in California. NPs, CNMs, and PAs can now maximize their existing skill set and provide more comprehensive and better coordinated reproductive health care for women in throughout the State.

To learn more about the project, read our blogs:

- [*Commemorating Roe by expanding abortion access*](#), January 22, 2014
- [*The real gold standard: Safe, licensed professional abortion care*](#), October 11, 2013
- [*Roe v Wade, California abortion law, HWPP #171, and the future of access*](#), January 17, 2013
- [*Nurse Practitioners and sexual and reproductive health services: An analysis of supply and demand*](#), July 31, 2012
- [*SB1338: Understanding the data and the debate*](#), May 15, 2012

Stay tuned to our website and [blog](#) as more results and articles are made available. For more information about this study, please contact [Patricia Anderson](#).

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Related pages:

- [HWPP data](#)
- [HWPP curriculum and competency resources](#)
- [Advancing access to abortion care](#)
- [Issue briefs](#)
- [Related resources](#)

For more information on the project, contact [Molly Battistelli](#).

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