



Pratima Gupta, MD, MPH



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joined Physicians in August 2015 as our third Reproductive Health Advocacy Fellow. Dr. Gupta has worked at Kaiser Permanente since September 2007. She completed a Fellowship in Family Planning at the University of California, San Francisco in 2005. During this fellowship, she also received a Masters in Public Health from University of California, Berkeley, in Global Health. She is a former Physicians board member and a graduate of the Leadership Training Academy class of 2010.

Dr. Gupta is also the volunteer medical director of St. James Infirmary and a volunteer assistant clinical professor at University of California, San Francisco. Her interests include increasing access to and medical education around family planning options, adolescent health care, global health (especially in South and Central America, India, and Africa), and sexual minority health. She serves on the mayor of San Francisco's Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking, the board of directors of the California Family Health Council, the San Francisco Medical Society's delegation to the California Medical



Association, and ACOG District IX's Legislative Committee.

DR. GUPTA IN THE NEWS

March 2, 2016

On the Supreme Court Steps, Our Doctors Are Proud Abortion Providers



Today, during the oral arguments in *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*, hundreds of reproductive rights supporters rallied on the

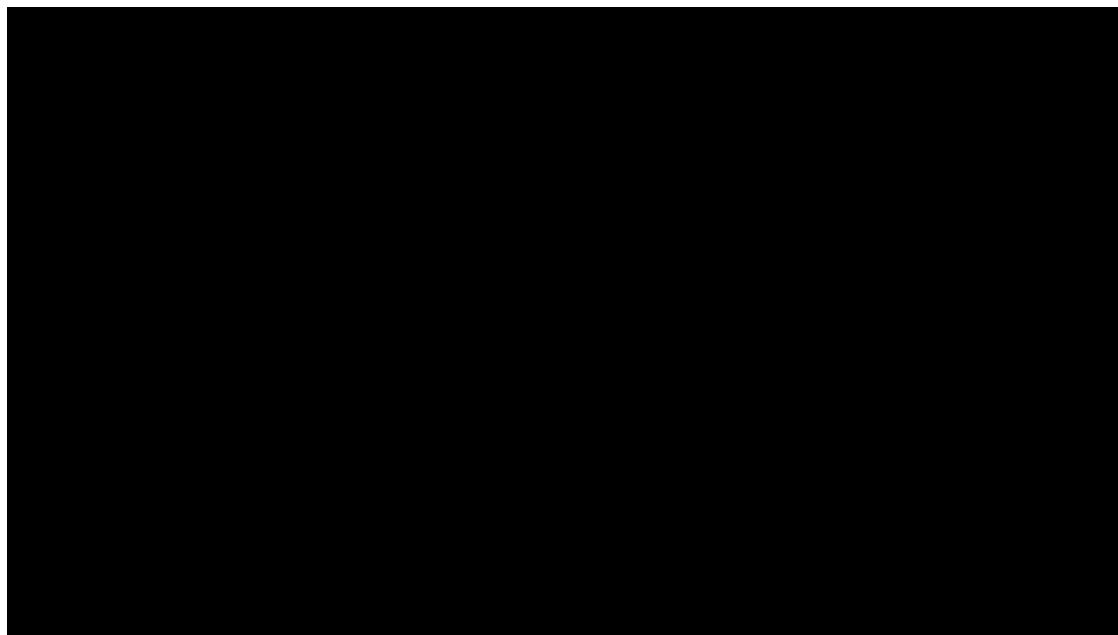
steps of the Supreme Court of the United States. As our colleagues at the [Center for Reproductive Rights](#) argued the case inside, speakers from all backgrounds—elected officials, college students, reproductive justice advocates, spiritual leaders, and abortion providers—stood up and said: **Stop the sham.**

As our Reproductive Health Advocacy Fellow **Dr. Pratima Gupta** said: “When we stand against these sham laws we are standing up for women who have the least access to care, who face the most discrimination, and who are least likely to be able to travel to the only open clinic that may now be hundreds of miles away. We need to ensure that ALL women, no matter their zip code, have access to the care they need and deserve.”

You can watch the entire rally, which features speeches from Dr. Gupta, our board chair-elect **Dr. Willie Parker**, and Leadership Training Academy alums **Dr. Sara Imershein** and **Dr. Bhavik Kumar**, [on YouTube](#).

Finally, we would like to share a wonderful video that was submitted as part of our “[Why I Provide/Why I Support](#)” project by **Vanessa Cullins, MD, MPH, MBA**, who is Vice President for External Medical Affairs at Planned Parenthood Federation of America. In this beautiful video, she talks about why she provided abortions as a physician and why she supports all

abortion providers and all women who seek abortion care.
Please watch it and share with friends and loved ones.



If you're feeling inspired, please send us your own video. [Read more about the project here.](#)

November 17, 2015

Highly Effective and Low-Maintenance: Spreading LARC Awareness



*LARC Awareness Week is November 15-21. Our Reproductive Health Advocacy Fellow **Dr. Pratima Gupta** discusses why long-acting reversible contraceptives are a great option.*

After being plagued by with a bad reputation and lack of awareness, long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARC) are finally gaining much-deserved momentum. The Guttmacher Institute recently reported that U.S. women are increasingly turning to highly effective LARC methods—particularly intrauterine devices (IUDs). According to the report, the IUD and the contraceptive implant use increased from about 9% in 2009 to nearly 12% in 2012.

As a physician, I can personally vouch for the fact that IUDs are the most popular method of birth control used by family planning practitioners — we know firsthand about their safety

profile and efficacy. With failure rates of less than 1% per year, LARCs are the most effective reversible methods available.

Most women are excellent IUD candidates, regardless of age or whether they've had children or not. And depending on what IUD option they choose, they don't need to worry about birth control for three, five, or 10 years.

Despite all of this great news, those of us who work in reproductive health and family planning still have to counter the misinformation, especially about IUDs, on a regular basis. Sometimes a patient will tell me that she's interested in getting an IUD but that a friend told her that they were dangerous, or that she heard only women who have had kids can use them. I always explain what I know to be true: IUDs are safe and effective and appropriate for women of all ages.

The implant (Nexplanon®) is a popular method with my younger patients, which isn't a surprise. In one large contraceptive study, over 40% of those surveyed under 18 opted for the implant. Smaller than a matchstick, it is discreet and hidden under the skin of the inner arm. It is an easy two-minute insertion that feels like getting a shot and doesn't require a pelvic exam. It has the lowest failure rate of any form of contraception — 0.05% — and works for three years.

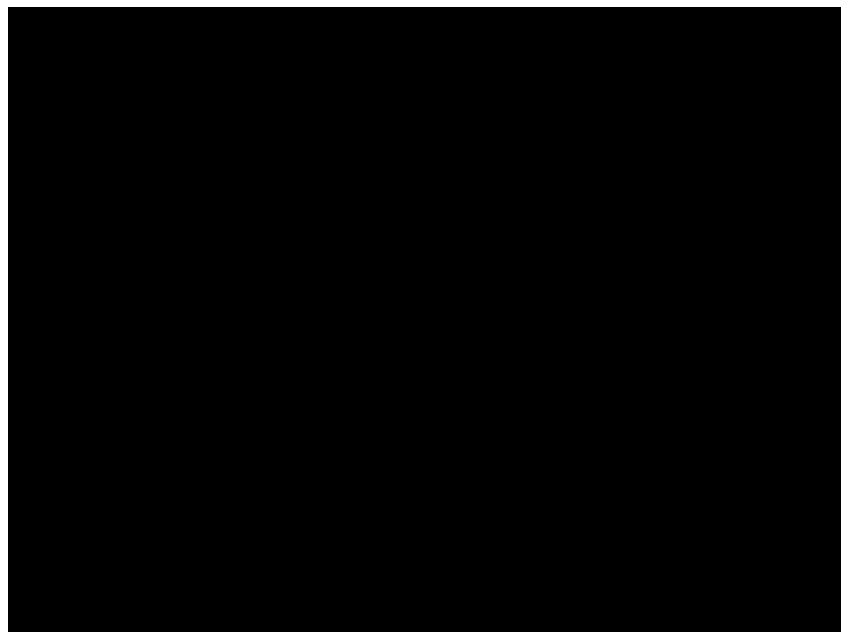
LARCs are fantastic—they're highly effective and low-maintenance. But I always tell my patients that the best birth control method for them is the one that they choose for themselves—and the one they feel most comfortable using. That's why we discuss all the options available, the full range of contraceptive methods, including LARC methods.

If you are a health care practitioner looking to learn more about LARC, here are some great resources:

- The NYC IUD Taskforce offers resource pages that are valuable for providers everywhere on [Adolescents and IUDs](#), [IUD as EC](#), and [same-day insertion](#).
- Our Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health Education Program features a PowerPoint presentation for health care providers, available for download: "[Long-Acting Reversible Contraception \(LARC\): First-Line Care for Adolescents](#)."
- If you would like to learn more about copper IUDs as emergency contraception, download our [emergency contraception practitioner's guide](#).

October 2, 2015

After 39 Years, Let's Make Hyde History



September 30 marked the 39th anniversary of the Hyde Amendment, which denies women coverage for abortion if they receive insurance through the government, with limited exceptions. This impacts not only those who have Medicaid insurance, but also those who are insured through the Indian Health Service, serve in the military or the Peace Corps, or hold federal government jobs.

As physicians, we believe a woman's health insurance should cover all of her health care needs, no matter what coverage she has or what income she makes. We want her to be able to make the best possible decisions for herself and her family. Currently, the Hyde Amendment creates unjust barriers for those struggling to get by and interferes with their ability to determine the best health care option for themselves and their families. This arcane legislation also creates a patchwork of abortion access across the country, [as Dr. Lin Wang points out](#), because only 17 states offer abortion coverage through state-sponsored Medicaid. In 2015 in the United States, abortion access should not be dictated by zip code.

"There are certain patients whose stories stay with me," says our Reproductive Health Advocacy Fellow Dr. Pratima Gupta. "I think of the mother with two children under four, who was also putting herself through school and working full time. She was sacrificing so much to build a happy future for her family—and when she found herself unexpectedly pregnant, she knew a third child would make that future tenuous; the cost of childcare alone would have been financially impossible for her."

“I also think about the woman who was living in her car with her boyfriend when she came to my office. Or the one who could barely make it to her appointment because she had to borrow her friend’s unreliable car, as she lacked one of her own, and lived in a very rural part of the county.

“It’s outrageous that politicians would presume that someone who lives paycheck to paycheck, who would struggle to collect funds for an abortion, would somehow be able to financially and emotionally support a child. The truth is that none of us, including the legislators that continue to uphold the Hyde Amendment, knows what a woman is going through in this situation. However, when Medicaid covers prenatal care but denies coverage for abortion, that takes away a woman’s ability to make important, personal decisions based on what is best for her individual circumstances.”

Because Physicians opposes abortion coverage restrictions of any kind, we have added our name to the groundswell of voices who support [All Above All](#)’s mission to “make Hyde history.”

Watch Dr. Gupta’s call to action in the video above, and watch the [All Above All video here](#).

September 29, 2015

It’s Pink Out Day



Since early July, several excellent, respected doctors at Planned Parenthood—our colleagues in reproductive health care—have been the

subject of a ruthless and dishonest public campaign devised to discredit their work as compassionate providers of reproductive health care. We’re seeing an unprecedented attack on reproductive health care—nearly 40 just this year so far. Extreme politicians in Congress are trying everything that can to ban abortion and attack access to comprehensive reproductive health care, and it’s time for that to stop.

Pink Out Day is our time to say to opponents of

reproductive health: We are sick and tired of the relentless attacks on reproductive health care. Listen to the one in five American women who has received care at a Planned Parenthood health center. Get politicians out of our doctor's offices.

As you can see, we're participating in Pink Out Day from our offices in New York, San Francisco, and Washington, DC:



If you haven't already, please take a moment to [add your name](#) to our [Statement of Solidarity With Abortion Providers Under Attack](#). We will be sending it to members of Congress to demonstrate the overwhelming support for Planned Parenthood and the excellent care they provide.

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