

Perspectives on a Quality Abortion Care Experience: A Patient Centered Approach [9F]

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Abstract Author Information

INTRODUCTION: A third of US women have an abortion—often a painful and emotional experience—during their reproductive years. Few studies have examined patients' experience in abortion care, resulting in limited evidence to guide clinicians on aspects of abortion care most important to women. Similarly, providers' perceptions of the patient experience have not been studied. Our study objective was to better understand women's and providers' perspectives on a high quality abortion experience to inform patient-centered abortion care.

METHODS: We conducted semi-structured interviews with 10 abortion providers at the University of New Mexico Center for Reproductive Health, and 25 women seeking first-trimester surgical abortion. Participants underwent a pre-procedure in-person interview as well as a post-procedure phone interview. New participant interviews were performed until thematic saturation was achieved. Interviews were transcribed and coded using Dedoose.TM

RESULTS: Women and providers value similar aspects of abortion care. When evaluating perspectives, an inverse hierarchy of priorities was observed. Providers consistently cited health metrics such as safety, procedure length, and pain control as primary determinants of providing quality abortion care. In contrast, patients desired empathy, a genuine connection with their abortion provider and clinic staff, as well as feeling heard and understood in a non-judgmental environment.

CONCLUSION: Women and providers valued somewhat different but complementary aspects of abortion care. The global clinical care, including all clinic personnel's attention to women's psychosocial needs, is integral to high quality abortion care.

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