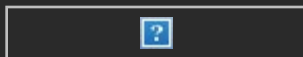


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Toledo abortion clinic Capital Care Network changes owners, halts surgical abortions

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Cassidy Grom | NJ Advance Media

Capital Care Network of Toledo is now called Capital Care of Toledo, after a business ownership change, and the former owner surrendered its ambulatory surgical facility license as of Sept. 10. (Cassidy Grom | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com)

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By [Laura Hancock, cleveland.com](#)

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The Toledo abortion clinic formerly known as Capital Care Network voluntarily surrendered its ambulatory surgical facility license last week, according to the Ohio Department of Health, since a new owner apparently has taken over.

Anti-abortion activists are celebrating the move, which means the clinic cannot perform surgical abortions.

It's unclear how much time has passed since the clinic stopped offering surgical abortions, and whether it wants to offer them in the future.

An administrator at the clinic, who declined to provide her full name, said that the business changed ownership. She declined to reveal the new owner.

Gabriel Mann, spokesman for NARAL Pro-Choice Ohio, also confirmed new ownership.

"They are not offering surgical abortions while the clinic undergoes a transition in management and reapplies for a surgical license," [he said on Twitter](#).

The clinic's administrator couldn't say if or when the new owner would apply for an ambulatory surgical facility license.

The new business is called Capital Care of Toledo, she said.



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Women in their first trimester can still receive medication abortions up to 9 weeks and 6 days, the administrator said.

According to the Ohio Department of Health, Capital Care's ambulatory surgical facility license expired May 31, but clinics are allowed to continue performing abortions while renewing their licenses under agency rules.

In early June, the health department conducted an annual re-licensure inspection survey and required Capital Care to complete a plan of correction for issues that came up, said Russ Kennedy, a spokesman for the health department. The clinic submitted the correction plan.

A state health department employee called the clinic to better understand information on the correction plan -- “at which time staff reported that (the clinic) was under new ownership who did not wish to renew its ASF license and was performing non-surgical (medical) abortions only,” said Kennedy, who didn’t have the date when the clinic indicated surgical abortions stopped.

A health department inspector visited the facility Sept. 10 to confirm there were no more surgical abortions occurring, and it was not. At that time, the clinic formally gave up its license.

The clinic “was not under a complaint investigation when it decided to voluntarily surrender its ambulatory surgical facility license on Sept. 10,” Kennedy said.

Abortion clinics don’t need an ambulatory surgical facility license to perform medication abortions, he said.

Greater Toledo Right to Life was the first to announce the license change.

“This is a real victory to be sure,” said Ed Sitter, the organization’s executive director.

Citing Ohio Department of Health records, he said the vast majority of abortions at the clinic were surgical.

“No more babies will be torn apart within their mother’s womb here in Toledo,” Sitter said.

In the past nine years, 22 anti-abortion initiatives have passed and half of the state’s abortion clinics have shuttered, noted Stephanie Ranade Krider, vice president of Ohio Right to Life, in a statement.

“While this facility will undoubtedly continue to profit off of women seeking chemical abortions, with over 1,300 abortions in Lucas County in 2017, the loss of their surgical license will save many lives,” she said.

Capital Care is the only abortion clinic remaining in Toledo, after the actions by the Republican governors and Ohio General Assembly, which has had a Republican supermajority.

One such law, in 2013, [required abortion providers to enter transfer agreements](#) with private hospitals. Capital Care couldn’t lock down an agreement in Ohio -- after the University of Toledo Medical Center didn’t renew its transfer agreement amid [a GOP-backed state budget bill provision](#) banning agreements with public institutions -- and secured one with the University of Michigan Health System in Ann Arbor.

In 2014, the Ohio Department of Health revoked the clinic’s license, ruling that the Ann Arbor hospital was longer than the department’s 30-minute transport time standard. Without ruling on the constitutionality of the law, the Ohio Supreme Court [last year upheld the Health Department’s ruling](#).

[Surgical abortions were able to resume two months later](#) after Promedica hospital in Toledo provided Capital Care Network a transfer agreement.

The ACLU of Ohio has represented the clinic in past legal challenges. It didn’t comment on the new ownership.

ACLU Legal Director Freda Levenson said the situation in Toledo “is how Ohio’s years and years of repressive legislation continues to take its toll on clinics across the state. In the meantime, the clinic is still open for patients seeking medical abortions.”

With Capital Care at least temporarily not providing surgical abortions, there are six other clinics that do offer them in Ohio, NARAL Pro-Choice Ohio Executive Director Kellie Copeland said in a statement.

A total of nine clinics, including the aforementioned six, offer medication abortion, she said.

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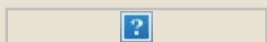
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