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Women's experiences traveling to California from out of state to receive abortion services

Blair McNamara, Yale University

Project abstract

In recent years, the United States has seen a decrease in both the number of abortion clinics and annual incidence of abortion. Reasons for this include increased use of long-acting reversible contraceptive (LARC) methods, closing of abortion clinics, and restrictive laws preventing some women from accessing desired abortions. Recent studies demonstrate that Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers (TRAP) laws and clinic closures burden women and prevent them from accessing abortion.

In this study, we aim to describe the ways in which restrictive policies interfered with women's attempts to obtain abortions in their home states, and their experiences in accessing abortions in California. Using a mixed-methods approach, we will interview women who obtained an abortion at the Women's Options Center at San Francisco General Hospital over the past six years to assess the barriers and facilitators to accessing abortion care. Specifically, we aim to investigate the following: barriers to accessing abortion in women's home states, overall costs, time from decision to procedure, stigma, and social support. In a sociopolitical climate that will likely bring increased restriction on abortion access in many states, understanding the barriers and facilitators to accessing abortion care in an abortion-friendly state is vitally important and may provide a roadmap for how we can increase access in the future.

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