



UPDATE | April 2, 2020

# Meet Our Advocates: Dr. Sumathi Narayana



**What are your pronouns?**

She/her/hers

**Where are you from?**

I'm a first generation American by way of South India, and I grew up in Massachusetts.

throughout the course of their lives, from birth to death. I am passionate about integrating early abortion care into primary care because I strongly believe abortion should be regarded as one of the many routine services that I provide, the same way I help people manage their diabetes or high blood pressure or depression. Before becoming a physician, I worked in intimate partner violence prevention and immigration advocacy as a rape crisis counselor and case manager at a shelter for survivors who were predominantly undocumented immigrants. So much of what I do today as a doctor is grounded in the work I did back then, so I am eternally grateful for that experience.



**What first inspired you to become a doctor?**

Like most American kids with immigrant parents, I grew up fighting my hybrid identity because I usually felt like an outsider, someone who was “other.” Over time, I realized that my brush with “otherness” made me more compassionate and attentive to other people’s experiences of feeling marginalized. Their struggles resonated with me, even when it was clear that my own experiences were much easier and steeped in privilege, in comparison to theirs. For me, being a doctor has always been about helping people in a way that is informed, not just by science and medicine, but by the social, financial, environmental, and historical forces that affect all communities. What ultimately inspired me to pursue a career in family medicine was the field’s dedication to serving underserved populations, the people often labeled “other” with an alphabet soup of acronyms: HIV+, IVDU, G5P0, and the like. I feel profoundly connected,



## What current policy issue especially

### motivates you to be an advocate?

As a child of immigrants, I am especially passionate about fighting against the unlawful detention and discrimination of undocumented immigrants. Every single day, in cities and towns throughout the U.S., immigrants and their families are making vital contributions to enrich and uplift the communities they live in. We should be respecting and honoring their strength, resilience and power, not criminalizing their existence and violating their human rights.

### How do you practice self-care?

I spend time with amazing family, whose endless flood of love and support never ceases to amaze me. I practice yoga, I read, and I write, and I try to nourish both my taste buds and my soul by cooking and baking as much as I can.

### Who is your social justice hero?

Forever and always, Audre Lorde. A true example of how feeling “other” can develop into the ultimate personification of power, beauty, brilliance, and integrity. Her contributions to this planet, as an activist and an artist, continue to inspire me every day. On the worst of days, and I’ve had a few, I’m always amazed at how her words can reach into the deepest depths of my soul, envelop me with love and encouragement, and remind me of how great this world could be, pushing me forward to keep going and to keep fighting.



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**PRESS RELEASE**

April 1, 2020

## Reproductive Health Care Providers: Abortion Is Essential

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE April 1, 2020 Contact: Kelsey Brill,  
kbrill@prh.org ABORTION CARE NETWORK NATIONAL ABORTION...  
FEDERATION NURSES FOR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

**PRESS RELEASE**

March 26, 2020

## Politicians Use Pandemic to Restrict Abortion Access

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