

APA Official Actions

Position Statement on Abortion, Family Planning, Legislative Intrusion, and Reproductive Decisions

Approved by the Board of Trustees, December 2023

Approved by the Assembly, November 2023

“Policy documents are approved by the APA Assembly and Board of Trustees. . . These are . . . position statements that define APA official policy on specific subjects. . .” – *APA Operations Manual*

Issue:

The U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* has triggered immense concern around women’s health, mental health, and physicians’ ability to continue to provide patients with the best care. Abortion is a medical procedure for which physicians should respect the patient’s right to freedom of choice. Limiting and interfering with reproductive care denies a woman agency over her own body and allows government intrusion into clinical decision-making.

Legislative intrusion will result in negative outcomes for women in terms of their perinatal mental health and physical health and is violative of reproductive rights. Any legislation or regulation that interferes in the confidential relationship between a patient and her physician and the provision of evidence-based patient care for any patient is detrimental.

APA Position:

It is the position of the APA that elective and medically necessary abortions should be accessible as part of standard healthcare. These measures are grounded in evidence-based practice, and decisions about them should be made by the patient and their physician. Governmental restrictions on abortion and family planning intrude into the privacy of the patient- physician relationship, compromise the rights of both patients and physicians, and endanger the patient’s physical and mental well-being.

Collaborators: APA Dobbs Work Group, Committee on Women’s Mental Health