

March 17, 2006

Mifepristone Medication Abortion Services at Planned Parenthood

Open Letter to Planned Parenthood Clients From
PPFA Vice President of Medical Affairs, Vanessa Cullins, MD, MPH

Planned Parenthood has learned this week that a woman who underwent medication abortion died several days after the procedure. We also learned that a second woman died weeks after a procedure, and we are seeking additional information about these tragic events.

To put this in context, since September 2000, when medication abortion was approved by the FDA, 560,000 medication abortions have occurred in the U.S. We know of seven deaths of women who had mifepristone medication abortions in North America. At this time, none of those deaths have been directly attributed to mifepristone. One additional death involved a woman with an undiagnosed, untreated ectopic pregnancy, a dangerous condition that mifepristone does not treat.

At Planned Parenthood we continuously evaluate medical information and medical studies to ensure that our services are based on the best science available. Our National Medical Committee has closely monitored medication abortion services since we began providing them in January 2001. It is our goal to provide you with the highest quality health care. To provide the very best care to you, our patients, Planned Parenthood has decided to update our protocol for medication abortion, effective immediately.

The health and safety of our patients are Planned Parenthood's top priorities. If you are a woman undergoing mifepristone medication abortion at a Planned Parenthood health center, you should attend scheduled follow-up appointments and contact us at any time with questions or concerns. When choosing mifepristone medication abortion at one of our health centers, you received extensive education and counseling on the method, what to expect, and whom to contact with any concern at any time, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Planned Parenthood medical professionals are available around the clock if you need to speak with someone.

For nearly 90 years, Planned Parenthood has provided women, men and teens with high-quality health care services. We constantly evaluate medical studies to ensure that our services are based on the best science available.

The full range of reproductive health care, including abortion services, are available to women who need them. Please contact us at 1-800-230-PLAN (7526) to be connected to the Planned Parenthood nearest you.