Is There Truly Choice Without Access?

Two cases heard in the U.S. Supreme Court in March focus on the issue of access—one on access to abortion services and the other on access to contraception.

EXPANDING ACCESS
Access has always been a guiding philosophy at Boulder Valley Women’s Health Center. Our clinic was founded in 1973, just months after Roe v. Wade, with the goal of providing access to abortion services to Colorado women.

Shortly thereafter, responding to women’s need for affordable, accessible and effective contraception, Women’s Health added family planning services. And, to ensure that all people had access to these services, Women’s Health joined Title X, the federal family planning program serving low-income and uninsured women. Today, Women’s Health continues to be a Title X provider and is the only one in Boulder County.

Over the years, Women’s Health has continued to not only protect access but expand it. We’ve worked to identify and break down barriers faced by specific populations—youth, monolingual Spanish speakers, and LGBTQI persons—so that all can access the reproductive health services they need.

AN “UNDUE BURDEN”?
Whole Women’s Health v. Hellerstedt is a challenge to a harsh anti-abortion law passed in Texas in 2013, which resulted in the closure of a majority of clinics in the state.

The impact of this law has been decreased abortion availability and increased wait times, travel times, and cost—making abortion essentially out of reach for many. The question in Whole Women’s Health is this: Do these restrictions constitute an “undue burden” on a women’s Constitutional right to abortion? In other words, is a right really a right if there’s no access?

DOES YOUR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM TRUMP MY ACCESS?
The second case, Zubik v. Burwell, centers on the Contraceptive Mandate in the Affordable Care Act (“Obamacare”). At

Over the years, Women’s Health has continued to not only protect access but expand it...so that all can access the reproductive health services they need.

Save the Date!
Our unique, creative, and much-loved fundraiser, Condom Couture, returns on Saturday, Sept. 24!
See back page for details.
Message from the Director

Growth vs. Sustainability

Dear Friends:

2015 was a banner year for Women’s Health! As is typical there were certainly highs and lows, but overall our organization has adapted very well to the variety of changes necessitated by the Affordable Care Act.

Most important, the quality of care that we provide to our patients is excellent. Now that more of our patients are insured, we have more “tools” to help them should they need it. And for those who are not insured, we have more resources to devote to assuring that they too receive the highest quality healthcare. So…what’s next?

I’ve been thinking a lot about the difference between conversations about growth vs. conversations about sustainability. “Growth” has been a hot button issue in Boulder in the past year, with varying opinions on how, where and how much growth is appropriate. However, I think the more relevant issue is one of Sustainability – what do we want Boulder to be like in the future? What can we do now to assure that the Boulder of the future is the type of city we want it to be?

These two conversations lead to very different inquiry. Growth is just a question of quantity and timing, while sustainability is a question of quality and vision.

Similarly, Women’s Health has been thinking about growth vs. sustainability. Now that we have successfully transitioned to the new healthcare marketplace, what’s next?

The Board of Directors has been discussing these issues for the past couple of years, gathering information and analyzing trends. At this point, it is necessary to ask the qualitative questions about our vision for the future. What kind of organization do we want Women’s Health to be in 3, 5 or 10 years? What can we do now to ensure financial and mission sustainability long into the future?

The Board has convened an ad hoc Sustainability Committee to explore these very issues. We will be seeking out opinions and feedback from all of our stakeholders over the next few months to inform our efforts and I am looking forward to envisioning the organization that will still be successful in 2026!

Stay tuned!

Susan B. Levy, Executive Director
Welcome to our New 2016 Board Members!

Susan Freeman Mann
Susan is the co-CEO of the Hawaii Five-O movie and merchandise, and has a background in marketing, media and public relations. Susan says she joined the Board because “I feel very strongly about making sure my children, daughters and grandchild have a place they can go that is safe and will care for those needs. I believe BVWHC is just that kind of place.”

Kimberly Lerner, M.D.
Kim is an endocrinologist at Boulder Medical Center. She brings medical knowledge and experience working with the Transgender community. Kim joined the Board because “I think that people deserve to have access to healthcare regardless of insurance or financial status. BVWHC supports the values that I respect and believe in. I want to help people that otherwise would have barriers to the healthcare they need and deserve.”

Laura Stark-Ghayur
Laura has over a decade of experience working with the international family planning organization, Marie Stopes International. She has lived in France, the United Kingdom, and Southeast Asia. Laura says she joined the Board because, “Women’s Health’s presence in our community is vital and inspiring – especially in the organization’s impressive work with often-marginalized groups and the client-centered approach you take. I am thrilled to join the Board and contribute to increasing access and lowering barriers to these critical services that are all too often coming under fire.”

Meagan D'Angelo
Meagan works as an Investment Advisor at Colorado Financial Management (formerly, Sargent Bickham Lagudis). She joined the Board because, “Women’s equality and wellbeing have always been important issues for me, especially working in a highly male-dominated industry. BVWHC is an incredible resource for many young women lacking support in society and sometimes within their own families.”

Tim Rohrer
Tim is a research scientist and consultant at the Colorado Advanced Research Institute. He has helped several nonprofits manage projects such as database/internal IT infrastructure, and is also fluent in Spanish. Tim says he joined the Board because he is “passionate about the cause of reproductive and women’s health, particularly the issues surrounding contraception, education, and healthcare access.”

Longmont’s Unity in the Community

Women’s Health Longmont Clinic Coordinator, Helen Everett (left) and Clinical Director, Heather Goodchild, represented Women’s Health at Unity in the Community in Longmont. The annual event, sponsored by the Longmont Chamber of Commerce, brings together members of the Longmont nonprofit and for-profit sectors as well as local elected officials.
Lobby Day at the State Capitol

A group of Women’s Health staff, volunteers, and SHAPE (Sexual Health & AIDS Awareness Peer Education) youth, spent a day in March advocating for reproductive rights at the State Capitol.

The occasion was Reproductive Freedom Lobby Day, which Women’s Health co-hosts each year with our partners in the Colorado Reproductive Freedom Coalition. Lobby Day participants received training in how to lobby and were briefed on bills before speaking with their elected officials.

Legislators were urged to oppose the deceptively-named HB1203: “Women’s Health Protection Act,” which is intended to create barriers to abortion access and shut down clinics. Bills we supported included HB 1294, Contraceptive Equity, and HB 1322, 12-Month Dispensing, which would promote contraceptive access and continuity, leading to declines in unintended pregnancy.

Note from an Abortion Patient ...

Dear Women at The Boulder Valley Women’s Health Center,

I just wanted to drop a note to each of you to say thank you from the depths of my heart for what you so graciously provide our community. As most women approaching the decision of prolife/prochoic there are many emotions. Each person I encountered at BVWHC met me with an open heart & open mind. I felt no judgment no desire to question my decision only support. And that has given me so much strength.

Many praises & blessings.

We ♥ our Volunteers!

Women’s Health appreciates our volunteers all year long, but during National Volunteer Week, April 10-16, we gave them a little extra love.

Volunteers provide vital support to our clinical and administrative staff as well as our patients. Out in the community, they are ambassadors for Women’s Health. We thank our volunteers for all they do!
Women’s Health Community Health Educators, from left: Laura Malaver, Bilingual Outreach Coordinator; Rose Leaven, Youth Services Coordinator; Ellie Askew, Youth Services Director.

Women’s Health not only provides sexual and reproductive healthcare to adults and teens at our Boulder and Longmont clinics, we also bring sexual health education and information to the classroom and the community.

Our Community Health Educators present in middle and high school classrooms in both the Boulder Valley and St. Vrain Valley School Districts, as well as to teachers, parents, and youth-serving agencies. Presentations are science based, medically accurate, culturally competent and age appropriate.

Thanks to our Bilingual Outreach Coordinator Laura Malaver, presentations are available in both English and Spanish. During January-March, Laura did a total of 22 classes for primarily Latin@* middle school and high school participants of the “I Have A Dream” Foundation program, and led three tours of Teen Clinic for the Dreamers. Laura also developed a curriculum and taught four classes for a group of middle school girls attending the Longmont Youth Center.

Laura, who also serves as a translator of Women’s Health written materials and our web site, says, “I believe in the incredible work we as Women’s Health staff do in various capacities. Not only do Ellie, Rose and I as Youth Services teach so many wonderful students, but Women’s Health also caters to specific populations like the Latin@ community.”

* Latin@ is a gender-neutral alternative to Latino or Latina.

SHAPE Member Wins Boulder Youth Award

Each year, the City of Boulder’s Youth Opportunities Advisory Board presents awards to Outstanding Youth Volunteers. This year, Women’s Health is pleased and proud that Ali Pyle is being recognized for her work with Women’s Health SHAPE (Sexual Health & AIDS Awareness Peer Education) program.

Ali, a Junior at Fairview, is in her second year with SHAPE. As a SHAPEr, Ali has presented in classrooms, planned events, led meetings and trainings for her peers, provided education at community events, lobbied at the State Capitol on reproductive health and LGBTQ advocacy, and shared local resources for health and wellness for all communities.

Women’s Health Youth Services Director, Ellie Askew, says, “Ali is a natural leader. She has a way of encouraging other youth to speak up and always lets them know that their contributions are wanted and important.”

Ali is not only an advocate with her peers but also a resource for parents and teachers on issues of sexual health and prevention. Congratulations, Ali!
Donate online at boulderwomenshealth.org

SAVE THE DATE!

Condom Couture 2016: Once Upon a Runway

Saturday, Sept. 24th

at the Glenn Miller Ballroom on the CU Campus

Watch our website for details!