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For more information, contact:
Bill Poehler, 612-825-6831

Women suffer in multiple ways from abortion, reveals new analysis of research

WHA urged to focus on improved maternal health care

GENEVA, Switzerland — Legalized abortion is widely touted as beneficial to women, but a wealth of medical and psychological evidence suggests otherwise, according to a [new analysis](#) of decades of research. The analysis was released today at the World Health Assembly (WHA) in Geneva by Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life Global Outreach (MCCL GO) and National Right to Life Educational Trust Fund (NRLC), an NGO based in Washington, D.C. Jeanne E. Head, R.N., Patrick Buckley and Scott Fischbach, who are in Geneva introducing the analysis, are calling for a renewed emphasis on providing women with improved maternal health care.

“Women face numerous risks with abortion, legal or illegal, and those risks are substantially greater in the developing world,” said Jeanne Head, R.N., National Right to Life vice-president for international affairs and U.N. representative. “Yet some in the international community have focused their resources primarily on legalizing abortion at the expense of women’s lives and health.”

“The evidence is overwhelming: Abortion is dangerous for women,” said MCCL GO Executive Director Scott Fischbach. “Abortion is by its very nature a violent and damaging procedure.”

“Rather than legalize or promote abortion, governments should protect the equal dignity and basic rights of all human beings, including women and their unborn children,” said Patrick Buckley, Geneva main representative for the U.K. Society for the Protection of Unborn Children.

The analysis, “How Abortion Hurts Women,” provides an overview of extensive research from multiple countries into the risks of abortion. Documented complications include hemorrhage, infection, cervical damage, uterine perforation, pelvic disease and retained fetal or placental tissue. Large record-based studies from [Finland](#), [Denmark](#) and the [United States](#) found that maternal mortality rates were significantly higher after abortion compared to childbirth.

Long-term risks of abortion, including subsequent preterm birth, infertility, cancer, miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy and placenta previa, can substantially impede future reproductive success. In addition, abortion is associated with increased risk of negative psycho-social consequences. For example, a [2011 meta-analysis](#) published in the British Journal of Psychiatry found an 81 percent increased risk of mental health problems. Anxiety, depression, alcohol and drug use and suicidal behaviors have been found to increase following abortion, along with damage to key relationships.

In the developing world, these dangers increase where basic maternal health care is unavailable. Ms. Head explains: “The incidence of maternal mortality is mainly determined by the quality of maternal health care. Legalization does not improve outcomes, but only increases the number of women subjected to the risks of abortion.”

MCCL GO and National Right to Life called upon the WHA to focus its resources on the improvement of women’s health care in the developing world.

“We call upon the WHA to acknowledge that abortion needlessly puts women at serious risk, both physically and psychologically,” Mr. Fischbach added. “We urge the World Health Assembly to adopt measures that protect women from abortion and improve women’s health care.”

The analysis is available in English, French and Spanish at the MCCL GO website, www.mccl-go.org. Copies are available at the WHA Geneva conference by calling Mr. Fischbach on 001-320-492-9062.

MCCL GO is a pro-life global outreach program of the Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life Education Fund with one goal: to save as many innocent lives as possible from the destruction of abortion. Learn more at www.mccl-go.org. Please subscribe to our [RSS Feed](#).