

New study identifies small yet essential workforce providing abortions in the US

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Efforts to determine the actual size and makeup of the abortion provider workforce in the U.S. often rely on surveys that are limited in scope or else focus solely on abortion facilities. To get more comprehensive

pictures of the abortion provider workforce, researchers at the George Washington University combed through a national medical claims data set to examine the workforce providing abortion care and management of pregnancy loss.

The new study provides an important window on who provides [abortion services](#) in the United States, information that is critically important at a time when access to abortion care is being curtailed in many states.

The team also found that while most clinicians providing abortions were OB-GYNs, [primary care physicians](#) and advanced practice professionals also provided this essential service.

Increasing the number of primary care physicians, and others, such as emergency medicine doctors, who can provide abortion care would help to boost access to these services, especially in underserved areas, the researchers said.

"As abortion services continue to be restricted, it is necessary to understand the workforce performing these services," Julia Strasser, a senior research scientist at the GW Milken Institute School of Public Health, said. "If providers stop performing abortions, there will likely be ripple effects beyond [abortion care](#) into pregnancy loss management and other full-scope pregnancy care."

This study is part of a larger project at the GW Fitzhugh Mullan Institute for Health Workforce Equity to create a comprehensive national data warehouse of the contraception and [abortion](#) provider workforce. This warehouse can help researchers understand who provides these services and the populations they serve, which in turn can inform targeted policies and programs that address unmet needs.

"Workforce Providing Abortion Care and Management of Pregnancy

Loss in the US" will publish on March 21, 2022 in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

More information: Workforce Providing Abortion Care and Management of Pregnancy Loss in the US, *JAMA Internal Medicine* (2022). [DOI: 10.1001/jamainternmed.2022.0223](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2022.0223) , [jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternmed.2022.0223](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternmed/abstract/20220223)

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