Vermont Health Care Coalition Title X Statement

A diverse coalition of Vermont health care organizations strongly opposes threats to Vermonters’ access to essential health care services proposed by the federal Health and Human Services Department.

Organizations participating include: Bi-State Primary Care Association, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont, Office of the Health Care Advocate, MVP Health Care, Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, UVM Medical Center, Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health Systems, Vermont Care Partners: VT Council of Developmental and Mental Health Services, VT Coalition of Clinics for the Uninsured, Vermont Medical Society, Vermont Program for Quality in Health Care (VPQHC), and VNAsof Vermont.

Federal Title X funding helps ensure that every person regardless of income or health care coverage has access to basic, preventative reproductive health care. The Health and Human Services administration officials propose changes to Title X rules in violation of medical ethics. The new rule would do three main things:

- Impose new restrictions that will make it impossible for many patients to get birth control or preventive care from reproductive health care providers like Planned Parenthood;
- Force doctors, nurses, hospitals, and community health centers to choose between funding and the ability to refer their patients for safe, legal abortion;
- Deny patients the right to get full and accurate information about their reproductive health care from their providers.

The American Medical Association (AMA) released a statement strongly objecting to the rule, the American Nurses Association (ANA) condemned the rule, and the American College of Physicians (ACP) asked the Trump administration to withdraw the rule. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM), the American College of Physicians (ACP), the Association for Physician Assistants in Obstetrics and Gynecology (APAOG), the National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women’s Health (NPWH), Nurses for Sexual and Reproductive Health (NSRH), and the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine (SAHM) released a joint statement opposing the rule.

The Vermont coalition echoes the concerns and objections voiced in these communications.

If enacted, the proposed changes will result in the loss of Title X federal funding to health centers such as Planned Parenthood for birth control, STD screenings, and other reproductive health services for low-income patients who may lack health insurance coverage. This will significantly restrict access to necessary care for both women and men particularly in rural, hard to serve areas of Vermont.

We call on the federal Health and Human Services Department to withdraw this proposed rule in the interest of public health and for the benefit of low-income patients of Vermont.
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