

FSRH and RCOG Joint Statement on the Government's decision to Fund Abortion Care in England for Women Resident in Northern Ireland

04th July 2017

The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) and Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare (FSRH) welcome the Government announcement that they will fund abortion care in England for women resident in Northern Ireland.

This week the leading professional membership bodies in women's health – the RCOG and the FSRH - put their support behind a letter, signed by over 40 parliamentarians, to the Secretary of State for Health requesting that abortion care for women in Northern Ireland is funded in England.

The core purpose of the RCOG and the FSRH is to improve women's health, and both organisations support the rights of girls and women across the world to access safe, high-quality family planning, contraception, abortion and post-abortion services.

Commenting on the Government announcement, Professor Lesley Regan, President of the RCOG said:

"I am delighted with the government's decision. However, while this is a very important step forward, it is still unacceptable for Northern Irish women to travel to one of the other three nations of the UK to access abortion care services. Every woman, regardless of where she lives, should have free and equal access to abortion care services."

"This government has a unique opportunity to address issues relating to abortion care in Northern Ireland. Access to abortion care saves women's lives, and therefore improves the life chances and wellbeing of their children and families, as well as society as a whole."

Dr Asha Kasliwal, President of the FSRH, said:

"The Government has made the right and ethical decision to extend access to abortion services in England to women who live in Northern Ireland. This is a major step towards realising women's sexual and reproductive health rights across the UK."

"The Government must now focus on guaranteeing other reproductive rights, especially access to high quality contraception services."

Ends

Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare, 27 Sussex Place, London NW1 4RG. Charity No. 1019969.

Notes to editors:

- The Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare (FSRH) is the largest UK professional membership organisation working at the heart of sexual and reproductive health (SRH), supporting healthcare professionals to deliver high quality care. It works with its 15,000 members, to shape sexual reproductive health for all. It produces evidence-based clinical guidance, standards, training, qualifications and research into SRH. It also delivers conferences and publishes The Journal of Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care. For more information please visit: www.fsrh.org
- The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) is a medical charity that champions the provision of high quality women's healthcare in the UK and beyond. It is dedicated to encouraging the study and advancing the science and practice of obstetrics and gynaecology. It does this through postgraduate medical education and training and the publication of clinical guidelines and reports on aspects of the specialty and service provision.
- For further information please contact:
Harry Walker
Head of External Affairs & Standards
Email: externalaffairshead@fsrh.org
Telephone: 020 3751 8077