



FSRH statement on RCOG's new position statement on decriminalisation of abortion

25th September 2017

As a Faculty of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG), FSRH welcomes RCOG's new position statement on decriminalisation of abortion in the UK. The Council of the RCOG voted today in favour of the removal of criminal sanctions associated with abortion in the UK, which the RCOG Council agrees should be officially subjected to regulatory and professional standards instead, as is the case with every other medical procedure.

FSRH is about to consult with its membership over the same issue. FSRH has long believed that women should be able to access prompt, safe and legal abortion wherever they live in the UK, free from harassment or stigma, and we support voices such as RCOG's to speak on behalf of its members to improve access and experience of abortion care.

In the UK, abortion is the most common medical or surgical procedure that women undergo during their reproductive years, and around 50% of pregnancies are unplanned. This reality indicates the urgent need for women to receive contraceptive advice and access to contraception via abortion clinics.

Dr Asha Kasliwal, FSRH President, said:

"It seems archaic that women should be subjected to criminal sanctions, and even life imprisonment, because they have terminated an unplanned pregnancy.

Besides providing women with high-quality abortion care, our role as healthcare professionals is also to contribute to the development of professional standards that will better regulate the procedure.

It is the view of many of FSRH's members that decriminalisation and effective regulation of abortion helps to enhance women's rights to planning their reproductive lives according to their own values and needs."

Ends

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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
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