



NEWS SOURCE

Planned Parenthood of Northern New England

Winter 2024

Dear Friends,

A new year always brings fresh opportunities and hope, and we are looking forward to all that 2024 may send our way. We know that this will be a big election year and we know that reproductive rights will be center stage as campaigns unfold.

As you'll see inside this newsletter, we were once again defunded by the New Hampshire Executive Council – stripping away more than \$770,000 we were awarded by the Department of Health and Human Services to provide our care. It isn't the first time the Council has defunded PPNNE, but it was still very difficult news to receive.

You may have also heard that four New Hampshire legislators introduced an atrocious 15-day abortion ban. While we're confident this will be defeated (it might be defeated by the time you receive this newsletter!), it is an important reminder that we must stay vigilant and that our opposition is not satisfied with the dismantling of Roe.

In December, we also heard the heart-wrenching story of Kate Cox in Texas – the woman who learned of a fetal anomaly and that her health and future fertility was at risk. Yet she was still denied the ability to get the medical care she needed in her home state. Inside, you'll also read a story of Dana, who lives in Maine, and learn how sharing these stories has the power to change minds – and laws!

We have an incredibly important role to play in this country as three of the states still able to provide a full range of reproductive health care. Together we will continue to be a safe harbor, providing award-winning and life-changing sexual and reproductive health care in northern New England, no matter what.

The need for your support of our work has not diminished. The need for our services only grows as we ensure that we are ready and able to serve not only our friends and neighbors in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, but also any who may travel to our region for care.

During these long winter months, I am reminded of the expression, "Only when it is dark enough can we see the stars." You, our supporters, help provide our stars and help to make our friends and neighbors healthy, strong, and empowered.

Wishing you a happy and healthy year ahead,

Nicole Clegg
Interim CEO



Serving Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont

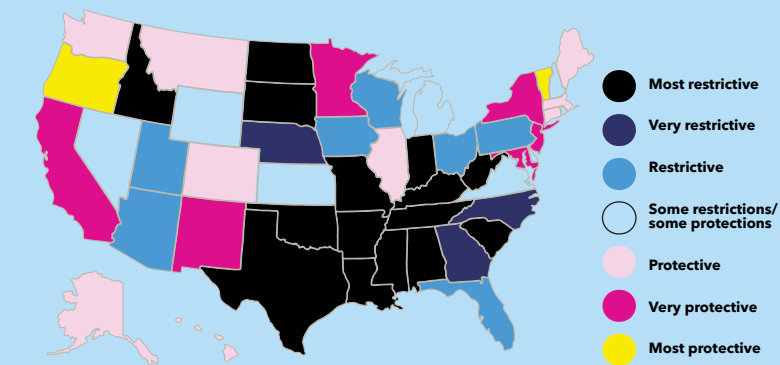
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Keeping an Eye on the Courts

Abortion Access:

January 22nd should have marked the 51st anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, the U.S. Supreme Court case that up until June 2022 gave people across the country the ability to access safe and legal abortion.

Since *Roe* was overturned and states were given the power to ban essential health care, tens of millions of people were stripped of their right to make their own personal medical decisions. Today, 1 in 3 women can no longer access an abortion in their home state and nearly 1 in 5 abortion patients are traveling out of state for their care due to bans and restrictions.



PPNNE represents three of the states where abortion access remains. Together, we're committed to remaining a beacon of light in these dark times for all patients who need us. We've seen patients travel to us from as far away as Texas and Florida to receive their abortion care.

Here is just one of their stories:

A member of the military traveled to PPNNE from Texas for their abortion. Due to the state's multiple abortion bans and restrictions, they were not able to receive care in their home state. The patient was insured through the military but learned that abortion is an excluded service.

Thanks to supporters like you, PPNNE was able to grant special restricted funds to pay for the full cost of their care.



It is challenging to provide sliding fee scale care in a health care system that is splintered, even more so as a result of the global pandemic. When we layer on the political attacks, lawsuits, and defunding, it creates more challenges.

With the help of supporters like you, PPNNE is committed to providing care to everyone who needs it, regardless of ZIP code or ability to pay. This includes patients traveling from across the country to be seen by PPNNE because our region feels the safest or because appointments are available.

Mifepristone Case:

Last month, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to take up the *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. U.S. Food and Drug Administration* case. This case was filed in a Texas Federal Court where a Trump-appointed judge named Matthew Kacsmaryk presides. The case uses junk science to allege that Mifepristone, one of the two drugs commonly used in medication abortions, was wrongly approved by the FDA 22 years ago.



This outrageous attack on Mifepristone is politically motivated, instigated and funded by extreme anti-abortion groups to further their agenda to ban abortion, birth control, and other sexual and reproductive health care nationwide.

As we await SCOTUS's decision, access and approval to Mifepristone remains unchanged. We expect a decision before the court term ends in late June.

Sharing your story can change laws

A few years ago, Dana Pierce began sharing her story of how Maine's law prevented her from receiving an abortion later in pregnancy in her home state, even though her pregnancy was not viable.

"It wasn't until I found myself in crisis and searching for answers that I understood the power of how sharing a deeply personal experience can help others, and eventually even change laws."

She had to travel to Colorado and spend tens of thousands of dollars to get the abortion she needed. Dana has shared her story directly with lawmakers in Maine and New Hampshire as well as through op-eds in statewide newspapers, interviews with journalists, speaking at press conferences, and testifying before Maine's legislature.

Dana's story inspired Maine's Governor Mills to propose and champion a bill to change the state's law, so that no more Maine families would have to go through what Dana's did. Dana's courage and commitment to changing Maine's law inspired so many, including a majority of lawmakers.

Because Dana chose to share her story, Maine became the first state in the nation after the *Dobbs* decision to expand access to abortion later in pregnancy.

Thank you, Dana! And thanks to all who have shared their journey. We are so proud to work alongside everyone who offers their personal stories. If you have a story to share, reach out to supportus@ppnne.org to make a real impact!

PPNNE Defunded ... again

On November 29th, in a vote of 4-1, the New Hampshire Executive Council eliminated more than **\$773,000** in funding for Planned Parenthood of Northern New England over the next 18 months.

This critical funding provides preventive health care services, for people experiencing low income, that save lives and prevent unintended pregnancies – basic health care such as:

- birth control,
- STD testing and treatment, and
- cancer screenings.

These funds were awarded to PPNNE through the NH Department of Health and Human Services, but the five-person Executive Council in NH, which approves state contracts, chose once again to defund PPNNE health centers.

This is the fifth time in recent years the Executive Council has chosen to defund PPNNE, for a total loss of \$1.3 million since the summer of 2021.

There is no other way to say it – this was a huge blow and could jeopardize the quality, affordable, compassionate care that Granite Staters receive.

This cut in funding puts more pressure on PPNNE's ability to provide free and reduced-cost care to more than 30,000 patients across our three states each year. Providing quality, award-winning health care in rural states like New Hampshire, Maine, and Vermont is our mission, and we remain as committed as ever to doing so, without turning anyone away due to an inability to pay.

This is why the support of wonderful people like you makes such a difference to our organization, and our ability to provide care, **no matter what!**

No matter what comes our way – political attacks, legal fights, defunding, or the loss of our constitutional rights – together we face these challenges and we get stronger.

Together, we are resilient.

When our patients come to us – sometimes scared, alone, or without means to pay – they leave stronger and more resilient.

**YOU,
our supporters,
make us resilient.**

There is no doubt, this has been a tough year for PPNNE. All health care providers are struggling with staffing shortages and navigating the challenges of our nation's complex and troubled health care system, especially since the pandemic.

The loss of Roe in 2022 energized both new and existing supporters – and as we move ahead, please know that the need for your support has not diminished. We need each and every one of you by our side as we continue to ensure that everyone who comes to us can get the confidential, award-winning, exceptional care we provide, regardless of their ability to pay.

As we start a new year, one way to invest in the future of our patients is by becoming a Monthly Sustainer.

Making a monthly gift via your credit card or bank account (electronic funds transfer) is convenient for you and provides a steady stream of income for PPNNE to rely on throughout the year, no matter what challenges may come our way!

“Truly the best care I’ve ever received. It’s rare to find a doctor who cares about your mental health as much as your physical health. I normally have panic attacks and faint during these kinds of visits, but because of both the care provider’s and assistant’s incredible level of support and care, I was able to avoid that outcome. I left feeling empowered.”

–PPNNE Patient

Please take this moment to make PPNNE stronger by making your gift today. Use the enclosed envelope or visit www.ppnne.org/donate to enroll as a monthly donor, or make a one-time gift.



If you have any questions about other ways to support PPNNE, including gifts of stock, a gift through your Donor Advised Fund, a special donation from your IRA (if you're over the age of 70½), or leaving PPNNE in your will or estate plans, please contact Jennifer Long, Vice President of Development



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Fundraising Team at 1-800-287-8188 ext. 9704.

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