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AMERICAN WOMEN FACE MOUNTING OBSTACLES WHEN SEEKING LATER ABORTIONS

New Study Reveals Financial Difficulties Most Common Reason Women Delay Seeking Abortions – Fewer Providers, Longer Travel, Costlier Procedures and Stricter Laws Lead to 4,000 “Turnaways” and Unintended Births Annually

(August 15, 2013—Oakland, CA) – Results of key data from the [Turnaway Study](#) released today show that the main reason women delay seeking abortions is having to raise money for travel and procedure costs. That delay means every year at least 4,000 US women are turned away from facilities due to gestational age limits and must carry their unwanted pregnancies to term. The *American Journal of Public Health* posted online today a peer-reviewed article entitled [“Denial of Abortion Because of Provider Gestational Age Limits in the United States”](#) and will publish the analysis in a forthcoming issue.

“Delays in seeking abortions are primarily due to costs, with young and poor women being the most affected,” stated the study’s lead researcher Ushma D. Upadhyay, PhD, MPH at Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health (ANSIRH) at the University of California, San Francisco. “Nearly half of the women who sought a second trimester abortion didn’t even know they were pregnant until they were in the second trimester and about 10% didn’t know until after 20 weeks. Once women are late in discovering they are pregnant, everything else is more difficult - there are fewer providers who offer later abortions; they have to travel farther and pay more to get the procedure, which lead to more delays. With new state laws imposing lower gestational age limits for abortion care, more and more women will face these barriers and will have to carry unwanted pregnancies to term”.

The Turnaway Study is a longitudinal prospective study of women who receive an abortion and women who are denied an abortion because they present for care after the provider’s gestational limit. The study, now in its sixth year, is designed to assess a variety of outcomes of receiving an abortion compared with carrying an unwanted pregnancy to term. Comparing first trimester patients who presented for an abortion and the women who were denied an abortion (“turnaways”), the key findings are:

<i>Reasons for Delay in Seeking Abortion</i>	<i>First Trimester Patients</i>	<i>Turnaways</i>
Travel and procedure Costs	36.5%	58.3%
Not recognizing the pregnancy	37.8%	48.1%
Insurance problems	20.3%	37.2%
Not knowing where to find abortion care	19.9%	33.5%
Not knowing how to get to a provider	12.8%	29.8%

Conclusions from the study are:

- Women seeking later abortions tend to be younger and recognize their pregnancies later.
- Women in need of second-trimester abortions are particularly vulnerable insofar as there are fewer providers that offer these services, and when they are available, procedures typically cost several hundred, or even thousands, dollars more than a first-trimester procedure.

- As more states approve laws that impose lower and lower gestational limits, more women will face these burdens, leading to even more unintended births.

The full article on the study can be found [here](#).

The Guttmacher Institute press release on study results is available [here](#).

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The study's lead researcher Ushma D. Upadhyay is available to discuss it findings. For an interview, please contact Geoffrey Knox at 212-229-0540 and gknox@geoffreyknox.com and Lex Curry at (518) 681-6410 and lcurry@geoffreyknox.com.