

Reproductive Justice:

Equal Access Now!

Pan-Canadian Day of Action
October 20, 2012

Groups and individuals across the country are calling upon governments across Canada to take immediate steps to improve access to abortion and other sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services in neglected regions of Canada.

Our Demands:

Reproductive justice encompasses a diversity of issues to be addressed, ranging from geographic accessibility to culturally appropriate health care to a universal childcare program. The first National Day of Action calls on Canada's leaders and policy-makers to **take the first step** toward Reproductive Justice by addressing some of the most significant gaps in sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services. In particular, immediate redress is required to correct disparities in abortion services in PEI, New Brunswick, and rural and Northern communities in Canada.

We, the people of Canada, demand Reproductive Justice for women and diverse communities by immediately improving access to abortion and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services in underserved regions of Canada, as follows:

1. Fully funded abortion services on request in Prince Edward Island. Abortion care is currently not available at all on the Island, forcing those with unwanted pregnancies to travel to Halifax or Fredericton. Abortion is a medically required service under the *Canada Health Act*, which means it must be universally funded and equally accessible in Canada, regardless of where individuals live. We call for:

- Provincial commitment and follow-through to provide abortion services in at least one hospital in PEI.
- Federal enforcement of the five principles of the *Canada Health Act*, including financial penalties against PEI if it does not provide abortion services within the province.

2. Fully funded abortion on request in New Brunswick, regardless of where abortion services are provided. We call for:

- Provincial repeal of New Brunswick's discriminatory and unconstitutional regulation that requires permission from two doctors to receive a funded abortion at a hospital. This regulation violates the 1988 *Morgentaler* decision.
- Full provincial funding of the Morgentaler Clinic in Fredericton, to comply with the *Canada Health Act*.
- Federal enforcement of the *Canada Health Act*, with financial penalties against New Brunswick if it does not fund the abortion services offered at the Morgentaler Clinic.

3. Improved access to abortion, contraception, and SRH services in rural and remote areas and Canada's North. We call for:

- Incentives and supports for doctors to provide culturally relevant SRH services, including abortion, PAP smears, and contraceptive education outside of major centres.
- Increased culturally relevant SRH programs and contraception access outside major centres, embracing the unique needs and perspectives of diverse communities.
- An end to disparities between health services for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians by investing equally in culturally relevant SRH services both on and off reserve.