

## Position Paper # 9

### Hospitals versus Clinics: Comparisons of Abortion Care

Abortion may be the only "medically required" surgery (under the *Canada Health Act*) that is better delivered in clinics than in hospitals, generally speaking. However, about half of all abortions in Canada are still performed in hospitals.

Hospitals	Clinics
<b>Disadvantages</b>	<b>Advantages</b>
Only about 16% of hospitals in Canada perform abortions	Clinics in most major cities in Canada
Policy restrictions often in place, such as quotas, gestational limits, illegal 2-doctor approval process, parental consent for surgery on minors, etc.	Few or no policy restrictions
May be subject to politics or lack of providers, with abortion services at risk of being withheld, restricted, or discontinued	Stable existence, most clinics protected by dedicated private ownership
Possible long wait lists (up to 6-8 weeks at some hospitals)	Short wait lists
Little or no counseling available	Full counseling provided
Doctor's referral usually required	No doctor's referral required (women make own appointments)
General anesthesia used, usually (slightly higher medical risk)	Local anesthesia used (shorter recovery time; less expensive)
Usually no medical support services offered in conjunction	Birth control, aftercare, and other reproductive health services available
Women may encounter anti-choice medical staff, or sterile, non-supportive environment with little privacy	Supportive pro-choice environment and staff
Abortions done at generally twice the cost to taxpayers	Abortion care more cost-effective
<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Hospitals present throughout the country, not just in urban areas	Abortion clinics economically feasible only in large urban centres
All abortions funded	Most abortions funded
Better security from protesters	More vulnerable to protesters
Late abortions available at a few hospitals	Abortions only up to 16 weeks, in most cases
Training centres for new abortion providers, especially for second trimester abortions	Often underused or not promoted as training centres by medical schools
Immediate access to emergency care for complications	Must transport complications to nearest hospital