



Abortion Rights  
Coalition of Canada

*Your Voice for Choice*

Coalition pour le droit à  
l'avortement au Canada

*Canada's only national political pro-choice advocacy group*

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For immediate release

April 16, 2014

## Cities Rally in Solidarity with New Brunswick Women

- ***Province's only abortion clinic to close in July due to lack of funding.***
- ***National outrage builds as NB Dept. of Health abandons women and creates health crisis.***
- ***Rallies in Fredericton, Toronto, St. John's, Charlottetown, Montreal***

NATIONAL – An emergency rally will happen in Toronto on Thursday April 17, in solidarity with the major national rally in New Brunswick on that same date (see details on page 2). The rallies are in response to the announcement last Thursday by the Morgentaler Clinic in Fredericton, which said it must close because it can no longer sustain itself financially.

The New Brunswick clinic is forced to charge patients directly for medically required services in contravention of the *Canada Health Act*, because of the province's continued refusal to fund abortion care at the clinic. The government enforces an illegitimate regulation requiring women to obtain approval from two doctors before they can get a funded abortion at a hospital. This regulation replicates the same type of harmful restrictions that led the Supreme Court to strike down Canada's abortion law in the 1988 Morgentaler decision.

"Pro-choice activists across Canada are outraged that the New Brunswick government has been violating the rights of thousands of women since the clinic opened in 1994, exposing them to needless hardship, trauma, and increased health risks," said Joyce Arthur, Executive Director of the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada. "The rallies are challenging the New Brunswick government to do the right thing – safeguard women's lives by improving access to abortion."

"Incredibly, in response to the serious health crisis that New Brunswick women now face, which is entirely the government's own doing, NB Health Minister Ted Flemming said the government 'has no plans to get involved'. That means the government is callously abandoning women to the risks of unsafe abortion or forced childbearing." Arthur said the government is required by law to facilitate prompt access to medically required services, which in this case means repealing its regulation in order to reduce delays, and expanding hospital access to abortion care. The Morgentaler Clinic does between 600-700 abortions per year – at least half of all abortions in the province – and NB hospitals do not currently have the capacity or resources to take on that many additional patients.

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**Fredericton rally:** *A Rally for Our Right to Accessible Abortion / Rassemblement pour notre droit à l'avortement accessible.* Thursday April 17, 12:30 pm, Legislative Building, 706 Queen Street. Hosted by Fredericton Youth Feminists.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1425319387725563/?ref=22>

**Toronto rally:** *Emergency rally in support of women in New Brunswick - EQUAL ACCESS NOW!* Thursday April 17, 5:30pm, Southeast corner of Yonge and Dundas. Hosted by Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics. <https://www.facebook.com/events/393207547487668/?ref=22>

More Solidarity Rallies will be happening later this week or next week:

- **St. John's NL:** *Celebration of Choice.* Friday, April 18, 9-10am. West parking lot of the Health Sciences Centre. <https://www.facebook.com/events/1467379233492593/>
- **Charlottetown PE:** *A Rally for Our Right to Accessible Abortion – Prince Edward Island.* Saturday April 26 (time TBA), Province House. [https://www.facebook.com/events/298000437021280/?ref=3&ref\\_newsfeed\\_story\\_type=regular](https://www.facebook.com/events/298000437021280/?ref=3&ref_newsfeed_story_type=regular)
- **Montreal** (date and location TBA)

### Background information:

Statement from the Morgentaler Clinic: <http://www.arcc-cdac.ca/action/NB-clinic-closure.html> (Déclaration de la clinique Morgentaler)

ARCC press release, April 11, *New Brunswick Gambles with Women's Lives.* <http://www.arcc-cdac.ca/press/ARCC-CDAC-release-apr-11-14-english.pdf> (en français)

ARCC's *Take Action for New Brunswick Women* page: <http://www.arcc-cdac.ca/action-new-brunswick.html> (en français)

Petition to NB government to repeal the regulation: <http://tiny.cc/yylldex> (aussi en français)

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For more information, please contact:

### Spokespeople for Fredericton rally:

Sorcha Kierne, Fredericton Youth Feminists, 506-262-0726  
Allison Webster, ARCC-CDAC, 506-471-7857

### Spokespeople for Toronto rally:

Michelle Robidoux, Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics, 416-856-5008  
Karolina Walczak, 416-347-6669.

### Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada spokespeople:

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<b>Peggy Cooke</b>	ARCC-CDAC, Toronto	416-709-1457

