

Abortion and the Effects on Mental Health

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Whereas, research demonstrates that women who experience abortions have a significantly higher risk of mental health issues such as depression, suicide, and drug abuse than women who carry their babies to term; and

Whereas, in the 50 years since abortion was legalized in Canada in 1969; and 31 years since abortion was decriminalized through the Morgentaler decision in 1988, studies conducted reveal adverse effects on a woman’s mental health; therefore, be it

Resolved, Ontario provincial council of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada, in 72nd annual convention assembled, urge the Government of Ontario to require all referring and/or attending medical professionals to disclose the mental health risks that may follow an abortion procedure to each patient well before the abortion procedure is performed.

Gifted by London Diocesan Council

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Brief:

Studies have assessed the mental health damages to post abortive women. Women are often unaware of the mental health risks they face. Those who experience abortions have a significantly higher risk of mental health issues such as depression, suicide, and drug abuse than women who carry their babies to term (Coleman, 186-189). Women suffering grief after an abortion are often unable to publicly express their sadness and are therefore at greater risk of experiencing complicated grief, a state in which sorrow, numbness, guilt and anger following a loss are long-lasting and interfere with the life of the grieving person (De Veber).

Abortion, the premature ending of a pregnancy, was legalized in Canada in 1969. To give women greater and freer access to abortion, the Morgentaler decision of 1988 removed the barriers that were deemed to be unfair at the time to women who desired to terminate a pregnancy. (Long, L)

It has been fifty years since abortion was legalized in Canada, and 31 years since it was decriminalized. In the decades since abortion was legalized, much of the stigma attached to it was reduced; but studies have been conducted in Canada (Mota, N.P.), that reveal the negative effects of abortion on women's mental health.

Considering all the evidence that has accumulated since abortion was made more accessible, the Ontario Government needs to require medical professionals to disclose the possible mental health dangers that often follow an abortion procedure. Each patient has a right to this information before an abortion is performed (College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario).

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Action Plan

1. Contact M.P. and share contents of this resolution and brief. Ask your M.P. to support action and reform that requires full disclosure of possible mental health dangers to those seeking abortion
2. Write letters to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Health requesting them to require medical professionals to disclose the possible mental health dangers that often follow an abortion.
3. Invite a guest speaker from your local right to life group to educate members on this issue.
4. Share the information learned through letters to the editor in local newspapers to bring more awareness.