

For Immediate Release: December 14, 2017 10:00 am PST

Contact: Brandon Gassaway / brandon@conwaystrategic.com / c: 202.888.6169

New Research Highlights Need for the Abortion Pill on California Campuses California students face delays, long travel times for abortion care

SACRAMENTO, CA.—Two studies were released today that point to the need for abortion access on California campuses and clarify how such a policy could be implemented. The research from University of California, San Francisco (UCSF)'s Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health (ANSIRH) program comes amid growing public support for making the abortion pill available on college campuses.

"Today, California university students face too many barriers when trying to access their constitutionally protected right to abortion care," said **Sen. Leyva (D-Chino Hills)**. "Our students, especially low-income students are being harmed by this lack of access."

Currently, while student health centers provide quality health care at low or no cost to students, no student health centers on California public campuses now provide abortion care. One study, which explored student need for medication abortion on campus, found:

- Every month, up to 519 students at the 34 University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) campuses seek medication abortion at off-campus clinics.
- Sixty-two percent of students would need to spend 2 hours or more on public transit to access abortion. For some students, this travel time is as much as four or six hours. (More than two-thirds of UC students and one-third of CSU students do not have a car.)
- Students wait an average of one week for an appointment for abortion off-campus. The delay can make a student ineligible for early medication abortion, increasing the costs of care.
- Student health centers have the potential to offer medication abortion at a lower cost than what is currently charged out-of-pocket at off-campus providers.

A second study explored the capacity of UC and student health centers to provide medication abortion and found:

- The staffing, facility, and equipment requirements to provide medication abortion are minimal, and researchers believe it would be feasible to provide this care at these public colleges in California.
- Visiting clinicians and telemedicine could be models to provide medication abortion at sites that have limited internal capacity.
- For about half of UC students, existing health insurance coverage is available to reimburse for abortion care at student health centers.
- Students in underserved areas face multiple barriers to abortion, including a lack of providers, inability to use their insurance locally, and difficulty finding transportation to more distant services.

"Our study found that student health centers are well equipped to provide medication abortion," said **Daniel Grossman, MD, professor of obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive sciences at the University of California, San Francisco**. "Existing infrastructure, along with crucial but minimal investments and innovations in service delivery point the way. Student health centers already provide comparable care and reproductive health services including birth control and STI testing—medication abortion is a logical complement to that care."

The abortion pill is a safe and effective option for ending a pregnancy that has been used in the U.S. since the FDA approved it in 2000.

###