

AAN PEI

Abortion Access Now PEI

Hon. Robert Henderson

Cc. Ms. Kathy Jones, Dr. Michael Mayne

Re: Access to Mifegymiso for Island Residents

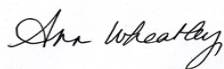
May, 2017

On April 18 (2017), the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) provided notice of its final recommendation regarding Mifegymiso, the two-drug combination approved by Health Canada for medically inducing abortion up to the seventh week of pregnancy. Analysis completed by the Canadian Drug Expert Committee (CDEC) Common Drug Review found Mifegymiso, also known as the abortion pill or the medical abortion kit, to be safe, effective, and economically advantageous when compared to surgical abortion completed in hospital. Accordingly, the CADTH Canadian Drug Expert Committee has recommended public reimbursement for Mifegymiso.

This highly anticipated recommendation is exciting news that has been applauded by health care professionals and reproductive justice advocates across our country. Mifegymiso has officially been available in Canada since January (2017), but actual access to the medication has been extremely limited thus far. Distribution regulations and lack of public coverage have been consistently cited as impeding the availability of Mifegymiso. The recommendation for public coverage put forward by the CADTH Canadian Drug Expert Committee is already functioning to erode these barriers to access; confusion around distribution is being addressed at the provincial level as governments interested in keeping up with advancements in reproductive health care move to provide coverage and, as distribution processes are clarified, physicians are showing greater interest in participating in the online training program for medical abortion providers. To date, governments in New Brunswick, Alberta, and Ontario have all publicly announced plans to fund Mifegymiso once the pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance completes price negotiations.

In keeping with this government's commitment to reduce barriers to abortion access, Abortion Access Now PEI, in collaboration with the Abortion Rights Network of PEI, urges decision-makers to keep pace with options in reproductive health care by taking the necessary steps to make Mifegymiso available in the province of Prince Edward Island. In adding Mifegymiso to the provincial drug formulary, government would demonstrate support for a full range of reproductive health options, help create an encouraging environment for Island physicians interested in acting as medical abortion providers, and effectively remove financial barriers to medical abortion for Island residents. The recommendation provided through the Common Drug Review provides another opportunity for our Island government to demonstrate support for comprehensive reproductive health care by increasing access to safe abortion options. We encourage government to act on this opportunity to ensure that Island residents are not left behind as medical abortion becomes available to residents of neighbouring provinces.

Thank you for your time and consideration,



Ann Wheatley

Co-Chair, Abortion Access Now PEI



Angele DesRoches

Co-Chair, Abortion Access Now PEI