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Joint Statement on Abortion Access During the COVID-19 Outbreak

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Board of Obstetrics & Gynecology, together with the American Association of Gynecologic Laparoscopists, the American Gynecological & Obstetrical Society, the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, the Society for Academic Specialists in General Obstetrics and Gynecology, the Society of Family Planning, and the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, released the following statement:

“As hospital systems, clinics, and communities prepare to meet anticipated increases in demand for the care of people with COVID-19, strategies to mitigate spread of the virus and to maximize health care resources are evolving. Some health systems, at the guidance of the CDC, are implementing plans to cancel elective and non-urgent procedures to expand hospitals’ capacity to provide critical care.

“While most abortion care is delivered in outpatient settings, in some cases care may be delivered in hospital-based settings or surgical facilities. To the extent that hospital systems or ambulatory surgical facilities are categorizing procedures that can be delayed during the COVID-19 pandemic, abortion should not be categorized as such a procedure. Abortion is an essential component of comprehensive health care. It is also a time-sensitive service for which a delay of several weeks, or in some cases days, may increase the risks or potentially make it completely inaccessible. The consequences of being unable to obtain an abortion profoundly impact a person’s life, health, and well-being.

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