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To: Interested Parties

From: NARAL Pro-Choice America Research Team

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NARAL Pro-Choice America Research Finds Facebook Enables Anti-Choice Disinformation Campaign Against Medication Abortion Care

Context

In 2020, medication abortion was estimated to account for [over half of all abortion care](#) in the United States. A recently leaked U.S. Supreme Court [draft majority opinion](#) in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* indicates that the anti-choice supermajority on the Court is prepared to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. This means that preserving and expanding access to medication abortion care will only become more important in the new, more restrictive landscape for abortion access should *Roe* be overturned.

Medication abortion is a safe, effective, common, and FDA-approved form of care, but anti-choice lawmakers in states across the country are passing medically unnecessary restrictions to limit access. These attacks are fueled by the anti-choice movement's years-long disinformation campaign around medication abortion care. Advocates for reproductive freedom and progressive allies must combat this disinformation by amplifying accurate information and demanding that social media platforms take action to limit the spread of falsehoods online.

Medication Abortion Disinformation on Facebook

Social media platforms have long enabled anti-choice extremists to spread false claims and extreme rhetoric about abortion care online. Facebook in particular has a [well-documented history](#) of bowing to anti-choice pressure campaigns and [allowing anti-choice](#) groups to [advertise medically-inaccurate claims](#) with impunity.

Given this context, it comes as no surprise that disinformation about medication abortion care is thriving on Facebook. **NARAL's analysis found that in the first quarter of 2022, nearly half (49.8%) of the top-performing posts referencing medication abortion on the platform contained disinformation.** These posts were shared over 8,000 times and garnered over 101,000 interactions across the platform, exposing thousands of Facebook users to proven falsehoods about medication abortion.

Anti-Choice Disinformation Narratives About Medication Abortion Care

Medication abortion care has a [proven record](#) of safety and effectiveness in the United States for over 20 years. However, anti-choice politicians and activists have coordinated a years-long disinformation campaign to fearmonger about medication abortion care and attempt to justify medically unnecessary restrictions on access. Key anti-choice narratives include:

- False claims that medication abortion care is [dangerous](#), [deadly](#), and [traumatic](#).
- Baseless fearmongering about [infertility](#) and [ectopic pregnancy](#) to promote medically unnecessary restrictions.



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- Promoting an unproven and unethical practice that the anti-choice movement refers to as abortion “reversal.” The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) [states](#) the practice is “not based on science and does not meet clinical standards.”

Combating Disinformation About Medication Abortion Care

Many people know little or nothing about medication abortion care, leaving a knowledge gap that anti-choice extremists work to fill with disinformation. Advocates for reproductive freedom must seize the narrative around medication abortion care and inoculate audiences against this disinformation by amplifying accurate information that reflects decades of data and medical consensus.

When discussing medication abortion:

- **Clearly define what medication abortion care is:** “Medication abortion is a safe and effective FDA-approved option for ending an early pregnancy. It is a non-invasive abortion option that involves a regimen of two medications, mifepristone and misoprostol.”
- **Highlight safety:** “Medication abortion has been approved by the FDA since 2000 and has been used by over 4 million patients in the United States. Leading medical and scientific organizations, including ACOG and the American Medical Association, recognize medication abortion care as safe and effective.”
- **Demonstrate the impact of restrictions:** “Bills that restrict access to medication abortion care by creating medically unnecessary barriers are part of an agenda to ban abortion, plain and simple. These restrictions fall hardest on women; Black, Indigenous, and other people of color; those working to make ends meet; the LGBTQ+ community; immigrants; young people; those living in rural communities; and people with disabilities.”

For additional message guidance and resources on medication abortion, visit the EMAA Project's [website](#).

In addition to amplifying accurate information about medication abortion care, **advocates and allies for reproductive freedom must call on social media platforms to treat disinformation about abortion care as medical disinformation with real-world harms.** Every body deserves access to accurate information when making personal decisions about pregnancy and abortion care.

Research Methodology for Analysis of Facebook Content

To conduct our analysis of Facebook content related to medication abortion, we utilized data from NewsWhip Spike from the period of January 1, 2022 to March 15, 2022. Of the 900 posts that included medication abortion-related key terms over that period, we analyzed those in English and Spanish with 100 interactions or more, a total sample of 217 posts. After individually reviewing each post to determine if it contained or linked to articles with medically inaccurate information about medication abortion, we calculated the breakdown between factual posts and posts promoting disinformation.