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### **Re: Medical disinformation on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and YouTube**

Your platforms are currently enabling, and profiting from, the spread of dangerous medical disinformation about the FDA-approved drugs mifepristone and misoprostol, which are used in the FDA-approved regimen for medication abortion care. These drugs have a long track record of scientific study and safety.

Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube are proliferating inappropriate and inaccurate information encouraging people not to follow the FDA-approved regimen for abortion. Failing to use these medications properly puts people at risk of serious complications, even though the drugs are very safe when used as directed. We urge your companies to take immediate action to remove medical misinformation and disinformation across all languages and to promote correct medical information.

Any medical disinformation is a threat to public health and the safety of users on your platforms. Particularly with the Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, which overturned landmark abortion rights cases *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, the need and urgency to remove medical disinformation--especially about medical care for abortion--and direct users to accurate, science-based information is critical.

Your platforms must take immediate steps to:

- Remove harmful medical disinformation about abortion care, including disinformation on mifepristone and misoprostol, and deplatform accounts that continue to post this harmful content.
- Link to medically accurate information to provide correct, scientifically sound medical information about these prescriptions, similar to what your companies have done in response to / to address COVID disinformation.
- Expand disinformation policies to include bans on medical disinformation, including abortion disinformation.
- Implement these policies across all languages used on your platforms.

Since the Supreme Court decision, as in other major political and news moments, people are turning to social media to gain comprehension of their rights, legal and political landscape, and the news writ large. This creates a saturated information ecosystem. In any information ecosystem, we must ensure and establish guardrails to prevent disinformation from spreading and harming people. In particular, those who already face disproportionate barriers to accessing quality health care and health care information are the ones most at risk of being targeted with disinformation campaigns.

Medication abortion care and accurate information on your platforms are vital resources for those disproportionately impacted by the recent overturning of *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. These include Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; Black and Brown women; LGBTQ+ people; disabled people; working class and poor communities; rural communities; immigrants; non-English speakers; and more. Systematically oppressed communities, especially Black and Brown communities, are disproportionately targeted with medication disinformation on your platforms. Black people already face systemic barriers to accessing quality sexual and reproductive health care information, and that gap will continue to grow with this recent ruling.<sup>1</sup> Disabled people who need care and are living in states that have now severely limited or banned abortion need access to accurate information online about where to travel or how to order medication abortion pills. Abortion disinformation and broader medical disinformation targeting LGBTQ+ people will make it increasingly difficult for these communities to seek out care and be treated with dignity and respect when they do.

Medications do not reach patients by chance. They are rigorously studied, approved, and continuously reevaluated by the FDA.<sup>2</sup> The agency is "responsible for protecting the public health by ensuring the safety, efficacy, and security of human and veterinary drugs, biological products, and medical devices; and by ensuring the safety of our nation's food supply, cosmetics, and products that emit radiation."

The prescription drugs mifepristone and misoprostol have been approved by the FDA for over 20 years as a non-invasive option to end an early pregnancy and safely manage miscarriage. The same medications have been available in France, Sweden, and the United Kingdom since the late 1980s and early 1990s, providing a long history of safe use.<sup>3</sup> This safe, effective, evidence-based regimen has a 95% success rate, and less than 0.5% of patients experience serious complications.<sup>4</sup>

These medications are also FDA-approved to be used separately to safely treat other medical conditions: Mifepristone is used to treat high blood sugar in Cushing's syndrome patients,<sup>5</sup> and misoprostol to prevent stomach ulcers.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [An Anti-Vaccine Film Targeted To Black Americans. Spreads False Information.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [FDA's Drug Review Process.](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Mifepristone for Early Medical Abortion: Experiences in France, Great Britain and Sweden | Guttmacher Institute.](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Medication Abortion | Guttmacher Institute.](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Mifepristone for management of Cushing's syndrome.](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Misoprostol Oral: Uses, Side Effects, Interactions, Pictures, Warnings & Dosing - WebMD.](#)

In 2021, the FDA decided to permanently allow access to mifepristone by mail after the "agency conducted a comprehensive review of the published literature, relevant safety, and adverse event data"--again demonstrating the safety of this medication.<sup>7</sup> A comprehensive report from the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) in 2018 further confirmed these medications' safety.<sup>8</sup>

Mifepristone stops pregnancy growth by blocking the hormone progesterone. Misoprostol, taken at a later time, makes the uterus contract. This process is called a medication abortion. This safe and non-invasive measure already accounts for more than half of all U.S. abortions each year.<sup>9</sup>

However, thousands of posts across Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and YouTube have attempted to politicize what is and should remain a matter of medical and scientific fact. These posts try to stoke fear, division, and judgment by claiming that these FDA-approved and provider-prescribed medications are unsafe, calling them "deadly," "dangerous," and "chemical," falsely claiming they pose "serious health risks," and describing medication abortion as "death by mail."

Your platforms' willingness to participate in undermining the trust and efficacy of the FDA, an agency whose work is vital to the safety of all foods and medications our families and communities rely on, is deeply concerning, especially amid a global pandemic. Through your platforms, you are not only enabling the spread of medical disinformation and undermining a critical safety-related government agency, but you are actively profiting from spreading these falsehoods through paid ads that have reached millions of people, including minors.

In addition, your platforms have allowed both organic and paid promotion of potentially life-threatening claims about a dangerous and medically unproven procedure known as "abortion reversal." Abortion "reversal" is a non-medical term used by those who are anti-abortion to describe a medically unproven protocol in which a high dose of progesterone is given after the first of the two medications are administered. This has not been well studied and relies on experimental treatment that does not follow standard research protocol. Proponents of so-called "reversal" rely on case series, the lowest level of evidence. Case series cannot prove cause and effect. In December 2019, the results from the first randomized control study (the highest level of scientific study) on abortion "reversal" were published.<sup>10</sup> This study had to be ended early because of significant safety concerns about the so-called reversal regimen, namely heavy bleeding that in some cases required blood transfusion and even emergency surgery. The study concluded that the efficacy of progesterone for nullifying the effects of mifepristone could not be estimated due to these significant safety concerns. Notably, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG), which publishes practice guidelines for OB-GYN care, including abortion, does not recommend the practice, stating that "claims of medication abortion reversal are not supported by the body of scientific evidence, and this

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<sup>7</sup> [FDA to permanently allow abortion pills by mail, a major win for advocates](#)

<sup>8</sup> [The Safety and Quality of Abortion Care in the United States |The National Academies Press](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Over half of US abortions done with pills, survey finds](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Provider letter medication abortion](#)

approach is not recommended in ACOG's clinical guidance on medication abortion." As shown by the failed study, this approach is not safe or effective, nor is it based on medical evidence.

Promoting untested theories across social media is not safe--it's life threatening and has the potential to cause people to try this dangerous method on their own.

The use and prescription of FDA-approved prescription mifepristone and misoprostol is not a political issue. It is not about left or right; it is about the inherent and potentially life-threatening dangers of allowing false medical information to overrun your platforms, undermining patient safety and the authority and trust of the FDA. Any medical disinformation is a threat to public health and safety.

Allowing this information to continue unchecked and even profiting from paid advertisements that reach millions of people, including minors, is not only irresponsible corporate behavior, it is also clearly in breach of each platform's policies that prohibit the promotion, sale, or use of unsafe products or inappropriate use of regulated products--in this case, prescription medications, especially to minors.<sup>11</sup>

The Supreme Court's ruling to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark decision that constitutionally protected the right to privacy and an abortion in the U.S., will only confuse the information landscape and further politicize what should be a medical issue. We urge you to take immediate action to limit the spread and reduce the harms of medical disinformation about mifepristone and misoprostol: Remove disinformation, link to accurate medical information, and expand disinformation policies to include a ban on medical disinformation.

Thank you! We look forward to your taking swift action to address this dangerous threat to public health.

UltraViolet and Physicians for Reproductive Health

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<sup>11</sup> [Endangering Women for Profit, Center for Countering Digital Hate](#)

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### **Civil Society Groups**

#ShePersisted  
#VOTEPROCHOICE  
2+ Abortions Worldwide  
A Woman's Choice, Inc.  
AAUW Seattle  
Abortion Access Front  
Abortion Care Network

Abortion Freedom Fund  
Abortion On Our Own Terms  
ACCESS Reproductive Justice  
Accountable Tech  
Advancing New Standards in Reproductive  
Health (ANSIRH)  
Advocates for Youth

African American Ministers In Action  
AI for the People Inc.  
Alianza Americas  
All-Options  
All\* Above All Action Fund  
American Federation of Teachers  
American Humanist Association  
Anti Defamation League  
Apiary for Practical Support  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC  
Athlete Ally  
Autistic Self Advocacy Network  
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network  
Avow: Unapologetic Abortion Advocacy  
Ballot Initiative Strategy Center  
Battle Born Progress, NV  
Be A Hero  
BlackPAC  
Blue Future  
Broward for Progress  
Carolina Abortion Fund  
Catalist  
Catholics for Choice  
Cedar River Clinics  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Center for Countering Digital Hate  
Center for Disability Rights  
Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement  
& Research (CLEAR)  
Center for Reproductive Rights  
Chicago Abortion Fund  
Chicago Foundation for Women  
Cobalt  
COLAGE  
Color of Change  
Colorado Organization for Latina  
Opportunity and Reproductive Rights  
(COLOR)  
Committee to Protect Health Care  
DC Section, American College of  
Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
Delaware NOW  
DemCast USA

Democratic Progressive Caucus of Tampa  
Bay  
Doctors for America  
Doctors In Politics  
Doctors In Politics  
EMAA Project  
EMILY's List Action  
Equality California  
Equality Labs  
Equity Forward  
ERA Coalition  
Faith Choice Ohio  
Faith in Public Life  
Faithful America  
Feed Our Democracy  
Feminist Campus  
Feminist Majority Foundation  
FL National Organization For Women  
Florida Access Network  
Fòs Feminista  
Free Speech For People  
Freedom From Religion Foundation  
Friends of the Earth  
Fund Texas Choice  
Fuse Washington  
Gender Justice  
Georgia Equality  
GLAAD  
Global Justice Center  
Global Project Against Hate and Extremism  
Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights  
(GRR!)  
Greater Orlando National Organization for  
Women  
Health Care Voices  
Ibis Reproductive Health  
If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive  
Justice  
Indivisible Plus Washington  
Indivisible Washington's 8th District  
Institute for Research on Male  
Supremacism  
Ipas  
Jane's Due Process

Jewish Women International (JWI)  
Kairos  
Kara Pravdo MSN, CRNP  
LB/OC Women Rising  
Liberate Abortion  
Long Beach Resister Sisters  
Los Angeles LGBT Center  
Love Me Unlimited 4 Life  
Lucy & Isadore B. Adelman Foundation  
me too. International  
Medical Students for Choice  
Melissa Taylor  
Midwest Access Coalition  
MomsRising  
NARAL Pro-Choice America  
National Abortion Federation  
National Abortion Federation  
National Birth Equity Collaborative  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Council of Jewish Women CA  
National Council of Jewish Women:  
Sacramento Section  
National Council of Jewish Women, Greater  
Dallas Section,  
National Crittenton  
National Family Planning & Reproductive  
Health Association  
National Health Care for the Homeless  
Council  
National Health Law Program  
National Institute for Reproductive Health  
National LGBT Cancer Network  
National LGBTQ Task Force  
National Organization for Women  
National Organization for Women (NOW) -  
Virginia  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
Network for Long COVID Justice /  
Strategies for High Impact  
NOISE FOR NOW  
NOW of Greater Marion County  
Nurses for Sexual & Reproductive Health  
Oregonizers  
Out Boulder County

ParentsTogether  
Park Avenue Christian Church  
Patricia Downey, CNM  
Plan C  
Population Connection  
Prairie Action North Dakota  
Presente.org  
Pro Choice Missouri  
Pro-Choice Connecticut  
Pro-Choice Minnesota  
Pro-Choice North Carolina  
Pro-Choice Ohio  
Pro-Choice Oregon  
Pro-Choice Washington  
ProgressNow New Mexico  
Public Citizen  
Reclaim  
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice  
REPRO Rising Virginia  
Reproaction  
Reprocare  
Reproductive Freedom Fund of New  
Hampshire  
Reproductive Health Access Project  
Reproductive Justice Action Collective  
Reproductive Justice Resilience Project  
Reproductive Rights Coalition  
Resilience  
Service Employees International Union  
(SEIU)  
SHERo Mississippi  
SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change  
South Texans for Reproductive Justice  
St. Lawrence County, NY League of Women  
Voters  
State Innovation Exchange (SiX)  
Stop Online Violence Against Women Inc.  
SumOfUs  
Supermajority  
Tampa Bay Access Force  
The Abortion Diary  
The Florida Immigrant Coalition  
The Sparrow Project  
The Tech Oversight Project

The Womxn Project  
Training in Early Abortion for  
Comprehensive Healthcare (TEACH)  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Unitarian Universalist Association  
United State of Women  
URGE: Unite for Reproductive and Gender  
Equity  
Vermont Public Interest Research Group  
We Testify  
Western States Center  
Whole Woman's Health Alliance  
Win Black  
Win Without War  
Wisconsin Religious Coalition for  
Reproductive Choice  
Women Donors  
Women Help Women/SASS  
Women Lawyers On Guard Action Network,  
Inc.  
Women of Reform Judaism  
Women's March  
Women's March Sussex - DE  
Women's Medical Fund, Inc.  
Yellowhammer Fund