

If you are looking for info on  
accessing abortion (anywhere in  
Canada) please call

Action Canada for Sexual  
Health & Right's Access Line:

**1-888-642-2725**

24 hours a day/7 days a week

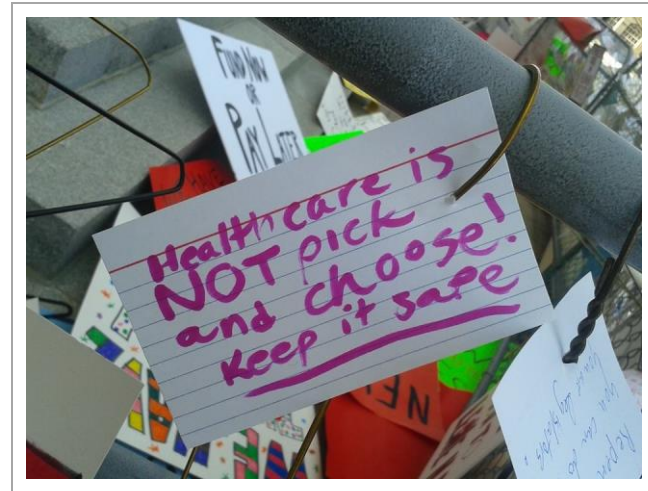
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What is going on with  
**ABORTION**  
**IN NEW**  
**BRUNSWICK**



**OCTOBER 2015**

**#NBProChoice**

First...

## What is abortion?

- Ending or terminating a pregnancy.
- In NB, the term 'abortion' usually means a "surgical" or "therapeutic abortion"-when a pregnancy is ended by doctors manually. A "medical abortion" is when a pregnancy is ended by taking pills prescribed, but isn't yet available in NB.

## Abortion Facts. They are...

- low-risk: rates of complication are lower than childbirth, or getting your wisdom teeth out. They do not cause breast cancer and do not prevent people from getting pregnant in the future.
- common: 1 in 3 people born with uteruses will have an abortion. In the US, 57% are in their 20s and 61% already have children. (Read more at [gutmacher.org](http://gutmacher.org))
- not equally accessible across Canada.

## (an incredibly brief) History of Abortion in Canada

Before 1988, anyone who wanted to get an abortion needed to get permission from a tribunal of 3 doctors. In 1988, Dr. Henry Morgentaler won a case that banned laws like this in the Supreme Court. Now it is written into the Canada Health Act by the Supreme Court of Canada that provinces must provide access to abortions.

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*Fact: It is not illegal or legal to have an abortion. It is a medical procedure, like a pap test, a vasectomy, or a knee replacement. It is a violation of the Canada Health Act if the province does not provide access to abortions. If this happens, like in New Brunswick, the government is breaking the law.*

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# History of Abortion in New Brunswick

(also very briefly)

- Before 2014, hospitals in Moncton and Bathurst provided 40% of abortions in the province. The cost was covered by Medicare, but the waiting lists were long and patients had to obtain permission from 2 doctors saying the procedure was “medically necessary”.
- The only alternative was the Morgentaler Clinic in Fredericton. Abortions there costed \$600-\$800, and were not covered by Medicare.
- Dr. Henry Morgentaler launched a lawsuit to have the cost of these clinic abortions covered by the province, but it died with him in 2013.
- In April 2014, when the Morgentaler clinic announced it had to close because of the lack of funding, Reproductive Justice New Brunswick (RJNB) formed.
- In November 2014, the Liberal Party promised to improve access to abortion. When it formed government, they only amended the law requiring approval from 2 doctors.
- They also said they would increase access to funded abortion by providing them in more hospitals.
- In January 2015, as a result of a fundraiser organized by RJNB and Fredericton Youth Feminists, Clinic 554 opened in the former Fredericton Morgentaler Clinic. The clinic is a family practice that provides trans healthcare, access to birth control and abortion care. The NB government still refuses to cover the cost of abortions at the clinic. (read more at [clinic554.ca](http://clinic554.ca))

**Premier Brian Gallant’s promised to remove all barriers to abortion, but not a lot has changed.**

# Abortion Access in NB:

## In Publically Funded Settings...

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*This zine is just about abortion access, but the problem starts before that. There are many doctors who do not prescribe birth control, there are many people without doctors, and there are many people who cannot afford birth control or Plan B.*

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Unlike every province west of NB, the NB government will only pay for a hospital abortion. • You can only get a funded abortion if you have a NB or PEI health card ( the latter only works in Moncton City Hospital). • Not everyone who works in the hospital is pro-choice: We have heard stories of people forced to look at ultrasounds or lied to about hospital policies. • You often need 2 appointments: Nowhere else does this. • The hospitals will only perform abortions up to 11 weeks after conception. • There is about a 4 week wait list. • If you don't have an NB or PEI health card, the cost in hospital is about \$1400. • People with NB health cards getting an abortion in other provinces have to pay out of pocket. • For abortions in Bathurst at the Chaleur Regional Hospital or in Moncton at the George DuMont, you need to find a pro-choice physician to write you a referral. • The list could go on and is longer the more marginalized someone is.

# Why Clinics?

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*Most provinces provide abortions in free-standing community-based clinics. Before the Morgentaler Clinic closed, 60% of patients chose to pay for a clinic abortion rather than go to the hospital for free. When the Morgentaler Clinic closed, over \$125k was crowd-funded for the new clinic (Clinic 554) because people care about them. Here is why people care:*

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Stigmatized services have better health outcomes for patients if care is in a community setting rather than a hospital. • Not everyone in a hospital is pro-choice. Abortions aren't inherently traumatic, but dealing with judgment in the hospital can be. • Everyone who works in a clinic wants to be there. • Abortions do not require general anesthetic to have an abortion in a clinic, but that is part of hospital protocol • Clinic abortions are cheaper: if the government funded abortions in clinics they would spend half the amount for each procedure as they do in hospitals • Clinic 554 offers abortion care up to 16 weeks, compared to 13 weeks in a hospital. • People who work in hospitals often feel they cannot get abortions where they work. • For marginalized people, a hospital is often a place of social control. Clinics provide a safe alternative. • Clinics are just as safe as hospitals and have plans to manage complications, however rare.

# Who is RJNB?

Reproductive Justice New Brunswick

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*Our Goal: A province where each person decides if, when and how to have children, and can parent with dignity and support.*

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We are a grassroots organization. We formed because of the anti-choice culture of New Brunswick, which caused the Morgentaler Clinic to close. RJNB is also works with anti-austerity efforts, environmental justice and fighting harassment of activists. We support other healthcare advocacy organizations like NB Families for Midwives. We love, but are separate from, Clinic 554.

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*RJNB wants to be anti-oppressive and reflect that in the way we speak. We hope this zine did that. We tried to make sure our language was trans-inclusive and not filled with hard-to-understand jargon. We are sorry if this did not happen and welcome feedback at [reproductivejusticenb@gmail.com](mailto:reproductivejusticenb@gmail.com). We will work to translate this as quickly as possible.*

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# What Can We Do?

## **Make the Government Do Their Job**

Abortion access has changed because of a lot of work by a lot of people, usually with no pay, and at their own cost. But your MLA should be working on this as part of their job. Write to them, or to Victor Boudreau (Minister of Health) ([victor.boudreau@gnb.ca](mailto:victor.boudreau@gnb.ca)) and Brian Gallant ([premier@gnb.ca](mailto:premier@gnb.ca)), call them, protest them, and talk to them on the street. Demand more.

## **Talk About It**

Talk about what you know, pass around this zine, discuss abortion experiences. Follow us on Twitter (@ReproJusticeNB) or Follow us on FB (Reproductive Justice NB). Tweet #NBProChoice. Follow us on tumblr at [tumblr.nbprochoice.com](http://tumblr.nbprochoice.com) Bring it up in class, in coffee shops, at the supper table...

## **Host or Invite RJNB**

RJNB would love to share information with your group. If you are having an event supporting or fighting for Reproductive Rights, we would love to join you. If you would like us to come share our knowledge in your area, please reach out [reproductivejusticeb@gmail.com](mailto:reproductivejusticeb@gmail.com)

## **Donate**

To us, by going onto [RJNB.ca](http://RJNB.ca) or to Clinic 554 at [clinic554.ca](http://clinic554.ca).

## **Join Us**

Join us at events or join us in person! Email [reproductivejusticenb@gmail.com](mailto:reproductivejusticenb@gmail.com) for more information about joining our organization. People from across the province-and outside NB-are welcome to join us in the fight for reproductive justice!



