

Reproaction



TAKING BOLD ACTION AGAINST
ANTI-ABORTION FAKE CLINICS:
VERSION 2

Table of contents

- **• Fake Clinic Refresher**
 - Get the facts before you act.
- **• It Gets Worse: Follow the Money, If You Can!**
 - How fake clinics are getting their hands on public dollars.
- **• "Abortion Pill Reversal" One-Pager**
 - A handy guide to a newer ploy by fake clinic networks
- **• Reproaction Resources on Fake Clinics and "Abortion Pill Reversal"**
 - A list of all our production on fake clinics and "abortion pill reversal"
- **• What is Bad Faith Medicine?**
 - How you can advance this new campaign
- **• Claim Your Power With Direct Action!**
 - What is non-violent direct action and can you use it to fight fake clinics?
- **• Fake Clinic Database**
 - Helping you locate your nearest fake clinic for optimal action planning
- **• Best Practices for Planning Your Action**
 - Fake clinic actions have unique needs, be sure to cover your bases
- **• NVDA Tips**
 - Best practices for non-violent direct action
- **• Testimony from Activists**
 - Hear what Reproaction volunteers say about when they took action to fight fake clinics
- **• After-Action**
 - Keep the momentum going
- **• Sample Letter to the Editor & LTE Tips**
 - Best practices for submitting LTEs, and a published letter on fake clinics.
- **• Customizable Press Release & Closing**
 - We put together a press release shell for you to fill and use!
- **• We've Been Hard at Work**
 - How our work and this toolkit has been updated since we released our first edition in late 2017

Fake Clinic Refresher:

Anti-abortion fake clinics exist to talk people out of having abortions by spreading misinformation about abortion and vilifying the people who have them and perform them. There are roughly 2,700 fake clinics in the United States, with more globally, and many in the U.S. run on federal and/or state funding. Some college campuses house fake clinics or their health centers refer to them, and some fake clinics set up right next to real abortion providers, increasingly by converting vans and buses to mobile units that can park outside and lure patients into their deception vans.

Fake clinics use a variety of techniques to dissuade people from choosing abortion, both inside the center and outside their walls. Fake clinics have been known to:

- o Give people incorrect information about their own pregnancy and gestational age (how far along the pregnancy is.)
- o Lie about what is involved in the abortion procedure and what its side effects could be: some even pose as medical professionals when they actually have no training or education.
- o Shame women for sexual history, drug use, decision to abort.
- o Tell people not to worry about carrying an unwanted pregnancy to term because miscarriage rates are high, suggesting the pregnancy may end on its own which could push someone past the legal termination date.
- o Harass people after they've left the center by calling them incessantly.
- o Promise help and services for someone who chooses to carry a pregnancy to term, then fail to follow through after the birth.
- o Use geo-location and targeted advertising to reach women seeking abortion clinics, then redirect their internet search results to fake clinic sites.

For more information on fake clinics and their tactics, check out our fact book: "All About Anti-Abortion Fake Clinics"

IT GETS WORSE

Follow the money... if you can!

That's bad enough, but fake clinics are also unregulated in most states, which means their sources and uses of funding are mostly unknown and unlimited. This is particularly shady because many states provide them millions in funding yearly.

While many fake clinics receive hefty donations from private entities, taxpayers subsidize them at a shocking price. At least seven states – Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas – have siphoned off tens of millions in federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) grants to these unregulated, tax-exempt groups. That means welfare funding intended to feed hungry children goes to fake clinics that provide flimsy reasons for their use of federal money, if they justify it at all.

Real Alternatives, a fake clinic network in Pennsylvania, was found to have misused as much as 1 million in state dollars as part of their \$30 million, five-year grant, and was investigated in other states, as well. Their contract with the PA state government remained in effect Despite this, and they operate in and consult in other states, as well.

Another Organization in Texas called The Heidi Group had similar questionable financial practices, and was recently ordered to pay the state back \$1.5 million of their \$7 million state contract. The Obria Group, which recently received federal grants totaling \$1.7 million, is also reported to have shady finances and exorbitantly high payments to their CEO and top staff.

They don't all receive TANF dollars, but fake clinics find other ways to pilfer public funds: Through the sale of "Choose Life" license plates in 32 states, taxpayers are often donating proceeds directly to local fake clinics. One large chain provides courses on how to apply for government and other grants in a variety of topics, including public school sexual health education, for which they get millions in state and federal grants yearly to teach abstinence-only programming.



Reproaction

**MORE TO LEARN AT THE REPROACTION
BLOG [HTTPS://REPROACTION.ORG/CATEGORY/BLOG/](https://reproaction.org/category/blog/)**

What is “Abortion Pill Reversal”?

Unproven. Unethical. Bad Faith Medicine.

Since 2015, several states have introduced, passed, and enacted dangerous legislation to force doctors to inform patients about the possibility of reversing a medication abortion through abortion pill reversal.

The following states signed abortion pill reversal counseling bills into law from 2015 to 2019: Arizona, Arkansas, South Dakota, Indiana, Utah, Idaho, Oklahoma, and most recently, North Dakota.

After Gov. Doug Burgum (R-ND) signed a so-called reversal bill into law in June 2019, the American Medical Association initiated a lawsuit to block the bill from taking effect.

The American Medical Association (AMA) is joined by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and other medical groups in its criticism of abortion pill reversal, and the laws that force counseling about it on patients.

The idea of so-called abortion pill reversal is an attack on abortion rights, free speech for doctors who practice real medicine, and the dignity of all people who have decided to have an abortion.

What’s more, there’s no proof that this speculative treatment proposed by anti-abortion activists actually works.

“Abortion Pill Reversal”
=
Bad Faith
Medicine

When prescribed, abortion with pills works like this: A person takes a first medication, mifepristone, which blocks progesterone from reaching a pregnancy that had been developing. Then, a person takes a second medication, misoprostol, which causes the uterus to contract. So, abortion opponents invented a theory: After a person who has decided to have an abortion with pills takes the first medication, mifepristone, anti-abortion activists can “reverse” the abortion by administering large amounts of progesterone, using non-standardized dosages and methods. Then the person is instructed not to take misoprostol. [1]

Without regard for safety, abortion opponents have not bothered to put their theory of abortion pill reversal to accepted methods of scientific testing and review. Instead, they have experimented on people without fully informing them they are subjects in an experiment, joining a troubling history in the United States of non-consensual medical experimentation especially targeting people of color.

The anti-abortion movement contends the sexist idea that women are indecisive and incapable of making decisions. In reality, research has shown 99 percent of women who have abortions do not regret them. [2] The creator of “abortion pill reversal”, George Delgado, has been barred by the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine from including his previous volunteer affiliation with the school on his list of credentials. [3] The University’s decision to distance itself from Delgado’s harmful, scientifically unfounded body of work speaks volumes about the absolute lack of credibility for this theory.

In their suit against the North Dakota law, the AMA wrote: “The Compelled Reversal Mandate forces physicians to tell their patients that medication abortions may be reversible, a claim wholly unsupported by the best, most reliable scientific evidence, contravening their ethical and legal obligations as medical providers.” [4]

Sources:

1. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2018/04/03/as-controversial-abortion-reversal-laws-multiply-researcher-says-new-data-shows-it-can-work-critics-are-still-skeptical/?utm_term=.5732bdea2094
2. <https://www.guttmacher.org/evidence-you-can-use/mandatory-counseling-abortion>
3. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/99-percent-of-women-dont-regret-their-abortions?ref=scroll>
4. <https://rewire.news/legislative-tracker/law/north-dakota-bill-requiring-abortion-reversal-information-hb-1336/>

Reproaction Resources

Publications:

[The Myth of “Abortion Pill Reversal” Perpetuates Mistreatment of Women of Color in Health Care](#) (2018, Truthout)

[The Creepy ‘Big Data’ Crisis Pregnancy Center Group that Must Be Stopped](#) (2017, Huffington Post)

Webinars:

[The Global War on Women: Fake Clinics Worldwide](#) (2020)

[Human Coalition’s Anti-Abortion Fake Clinics Are A Public Health Disaster](#) (2019)

[Abortion Pill ‘Reversal’ Is Unproven and Unethical](#) (2018)

[Bye, Bye, Fake Clinics: Using Direct Action to Target CPCs in Your Community](#) (2017)

Blogs:

Reproaction has over 30 blog posts about fake clinics, here's a sampling of our most recent and most impacting:

[Fake Clinics, Real Taxpayer Dollars Misused](#) (2020)

[Democracy in Crisis, Enabling Anti-Abortion Lies and Hampering Medicaid Expansion in North Carolina](#) (2020)

[How Anti-Abortion Forces Are Invading Your Privacy](#) (2020)

[The ‘Pro-Life’ Double Standard in Using ‘Free Speech’ to Restrict Abortion](#) (2019)
[States Are Forcing Doctors to Promote Unproven and Unethical “Abortion Pill Reversal”](#) (2019)

[Unproven and Unethical ‘Abortion Pill Reversal’ Strategy Rests on Old Anti-Abortion Politics](#) (2018)

[Fake Clinic Network Repackaging the Same Lies in Deceptive New Website](#) (2018)

[A Changing of the Guard Doesn’t Mean Texas’ Fake Clinics Will Start Providing Quality, Non-Biased Care](#) (2018)

[Children Separated from Their Families Should Go Back to Their Families, Not a Fake Clinic Network’s Foster System](#) (2018)

[What’s in a Name? A Lot, If You’re A Fake Clinic Trying to Trick People](#) (2018)

[Fake Clinics Play the Long Game by Targeting Schoolchildren](#) (2018)

[Human Coalition: The Frankenstein Monster of CPCs](#) (2017)

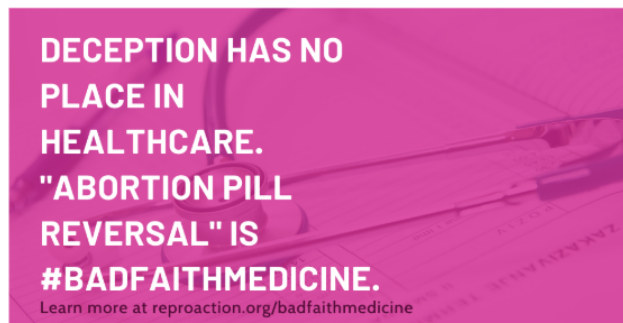
[Alternatives to Visiting a Crisis Pregnancy Center](#) (2017)

Also, be sure to check out our updated Fact Book: All About Anti-Abortion Fake Clinics!

#BadFaithMedicine

Reproaction invites you to spread the word about anti-abortion, anti-science, anti-woman and anti-LGBTQ #BadFaithMedicine. This campaign exists to make the public aware of the bad-faith arguments and shady actors lying and shaming their way into communities around the country. Whether it's at a fake clinic or the state house, anti-abortion organizations are trying to normalize their version of healthcare: one that isn't based on real scientific research, ignores or demeans LGBTQ people, and excludes abortion and contraception as essential healthcare. The following pages will give you the tools to turn your newfound education into action to get anti-abortion fake clinics and their supporting organizations out of your community.

First: say it with images! Use photos from direct actions, original designs, or these graphics and the many others available in the 'resources' section of our website to get your people hyped to take action against #BadFaithMedicine:



Claim your power with direct action!

Now that you're up to speed and ready to take on anti-abortion fake clinics in your community, here's how we take our message to the public through non-violent direct action (NVDA):

What is direct action?

"Direct action means that we take collective action to change our circumstances, without handing our power to a middle person." – from www.beautifultrouble.org, a resource for non-violent direct action movements

What is our theory of change?

Reproaction believes that when we take bold action, including direct action, in service of our mission to increase access to abortion and advance reproductive justice, our allies will grow stronger in their positions and our opponents will grow weaker.

Remember: Non-violent is not the same as "peaceful." We aim to be loud and be heard in a non-violent way, which sometimes includes disruption and usually involves noise!

The Fake Clinic Database

To take action against your local fake clinic, first you need to find it! Reproaction's Fake Clinic Database is a collection of all discoverable crisis pregnancy center locations nationwide, independently verified and regularly updated by Reproaction. We are proud to provide access to the Fake Clinic Database in an open-source fashion on our website at: <https://Reproaction.org/FakeClinicDatabase/>

So you've found your local fake clinic. Now what? Some ideas:

Hold a protest outside: Fake clinics operate largely through deception, so they lose power when you expose them for what they truly are. Some do not want people to know they oppose abortion – they just want people to come in the door. Regardless of whether they own up to their stance on abortion, it's important to let people know about the deception and shaming that occurs inside their walls. Some fake clinics have misleading signs, are located close to or in the same building as real abortion clinics, and they lose power when you peel back the curtain and let the public, especially their neighbors and potential clients, know that they're not actually providing prenatal and postpartum care. If a fake clinic is located near an actual abortion clinic, check with staff at the real clinic to find an amenable protest location: some clinics don't want protesters, even supportive ones, out of concern for the comfort and privacy of their patients. For more resources on the theory and practice of direct action and how to plan one, check out Reproaction's Act & Learn Webinar: [DIY Action Planning for Activists](#).

Write a petition, letter to the editor, or opinion editorial (op-ed): This could also serve to unveil the true motives of your local fake clinic, or bring to light issues of potential taxpayer dollars the center may use to prey on women in your area. Check out our blog post, "How are Crisis Pregnancy Centers Robbing Taxpayers?" linked on the previous page to learn more about public funding for fake clinics and which states are most implicated in this inappropriate misdirection of public funds. Tip: It's particularly powerful to research what public dollars may be flowing to fake clinics in your state, and call for investigation into their use of taxpayer funds. You may also live near fake clinics that have been given Title X federal family planning funds by the Trump administration in their efforts to block that money from clinics that provide abortion, contraceptives, and real comprehensive reproductive care.

Host a speak-out/teach-in: If you have a fake clinic in your area, you probably won't have to look far for someone who has been duped by them. If you can find multiple people, form a group and speak out about the fake clinic's alternative facts and predatory tactics! It's ok if you don't know anyone or they aren't comfortable speaking — hosting a community meeting, town hall, or another event to educate your community about fake clinics can help galvanize, build power, share resources, and generate ideas to tackle the deception.

Best Practices for Planning Your Fake Clinic Action

Your community may have multiple fake clinics, or you may be lucky enough to have none, but chances are wherever you live, there's one not too far away. Some important things to think about for planning actions is:

- Does your fake clinic exist close to a real abortion provider?

It's a common strategy for fake clinics to try and confuse patients by opening near real clinics. If the two are in close proximity (like the same strip mall), it's a best practice to let the clinic know you're interested in taking action, and heed their advice on whether or not that location is a good action site.

- Is there street visibility for your action?

The best picket actions are ones people can see. If there's minimal traffic near the site, it may be best to choose one farther away that has a better chance to be seen by the community.

- Does the fake clinic co-locate with a maternity home or shelter?

There are real ethical and security, concerns of taking action at a location where vulnerable people may be housed. As a reproductive justice organization centering Black women and the right to parent, the right not to parent, and the right to raise families in safe and healthy environments free from oppression, Reproaction does not recommend protesting at locations where individuals in vulnerable situations during pregnancy are living.

- Is there public transit to get to the location?

Make the action as accessible as possible to all volunteers, if there's no transit, consider how you can coordinate a carpool.

- Are there public sidewalks, or is the center on private property?

Know the rules for demonstrating on public property in the city you're in. If the clinic is on private property and you enter it, or if there are local laws against demonstrations of a certain type or size, they may call the police to remove you. As a reproductive justice organization sensitive to racial oppression, we strongly advise minimizing the potential of interaction between activists and the police as you devise your plan.

- What accessibility constraints may your volunteers face?

Is there seating available? Is the ground level, paved, hilly? Will you use a horn? Build an action plan that includes everyone who may want to show up, regardless of how they do so.

Additionally, always follow health & safety guidelines including mask-wearing and social distancing. For more discussion on the intersection of disability, abortion rights, and action, check out our Act & Learn Webinar: [Disability Rights & Reproductive Justice](#).



NVDA Tips:

Engage the opposition sparingly, and with discretion. These people do not want to be revealed for their true selves, and they may become violent or otherwise aggressive to you and your fellow activists. To keep all members of your community safe — being mindful of the needs of people of color, queer people, women, and people with disabilities — limit confrontation with the opposition. They want your reaction, they want to see you sweat, and they want to take pictures or video of you not at your best. Don't let them! Direct action is about taking power, maintaining it, and building it. Keep doing what you're doing and like minds will join you. Haters have nothing to add to your action, and can take you off-message while putting others at risk.

If someone gets your personal space, try to stand still and yell out for your allies to come to your aid. Shout, "This person is invading my space!" This may seem silly, but abortion opponents are known to crowd people out and incite a physical response, or to get someone to trip or fall which they'll then claim was an assault on them. Loudly calling out their behavior will get eyewitnesses on your side in case abortion opponents pull any tricks.

Engage the media frequently, but don't cry wolf.

If you're calling local media to publicize an action, you need to start by building a relationship with friendly, trustworthy press figures, and prove your trust and friendship can be earned in return. Alert them to stories they may want to cover, but don't pepper with updates or false promises about your group or action. Have a clear message and set achievable expectations for your action's media relevance. If the media asks you how many people are going to be there, do not give them an exact number, but also don't inflate expectations. Give a range and if you're pleasantly surprised, great! If turnout isn't hot, you didn't rob a busy reporter's time with false promises (which loses trust quickly!) For more on press strategies, check our Act & Learn Webinar: [Awesome Communication for Activists.](#)

Testimony From Activists

Activism not only builds change in communities – it changes activists ourselves. Hear why dedicated Reproaction volunteers are motivated to hold fake clinics accountable through direct action:

“Few things about the anti-choice movement make me as angry as crisis pregnancy centers (and that is saying something). I take action against them because it feels good to be on the offensive for a change, to tell people that we won't stand for them spreading misinformation and preying on vulnerable people looking for real medical advice.”
– Holly Bowers

“Every time I show up to protest 'crisis pregnancy centers,' I think about how these fake clinics could be deceiving a friend or family member. So I take action because I believe all people have the right to truthful, evidence-based, and high-quality healthcare – and abortion *is* healthcare.”
– Karishma Oza

“Taking action against fake clinics is important to me because everyone should have access to health care providers who are honest and trustworthy. My hope in exposing fake clinics is not only to make sure future patients aren't given false information or shamed out of getting the care they need, but also that the community around the fake clinic is aware of what is going on in their neighborhood so they can continue to educate their neighbors” – Molly Mallon

Do you want to share your reason for taking action against anti-abortion fake clinics? Sound off on Twitter and feel free to tag #BadFaithMedicine, or tell @reproaction how your activism is going.

After-Action

- **Follow up — it's not just about the protest:** Applaud great actions from your group or partners in the movement, thank your press contacts, and keep the momentum going afterwards! It's easy to get activist burnout, especially when you're working against as entrenched and doggedly-focused opponents as the anti-abortion crowd. Thank those that helped and empower your group to celebrate shared successes!
- **Always amplify your work on social media!** "Pics or it didn't happen" is true for a lot of things, and especially successful direct actions. You can prove your show of power (the opposition probably will try to diminish the event anyway) and shareable content like photos, videos, and livestreams can continue momentum for next time or pull in new people who see how much fun you had!



Sample Letter to the Editor

The below was written by a concerned North Carolinian and Reproaction supporter in *The Charlotte Observer* [here](#).

June 27, 2019

TO THE EDITOR: DON'T GIVE THESE 'CLINICS' TAX DOLLARS

Regarding “NC budget would quadruple money for anti-abortion group questioned on oversight” (June 21):

Our policymakers are gambling with my patients’ welfare and public money by giving the anti-abortion chain Human Coalition a \$1.2 million grant in the state’s budget. As an abortion clinic director, I know all too well that the truth behind these “clinics” is that they push stigma and deception, and the state’s own auditors have determined this group hasn’t met the terms of the money they’ve already taken from taxpayers. Human Coalition’s tactics are deeply unethical and the organization’s leadership has been marred by racist, sexist, anti-Semitic and otherwise off-color public statements, instances which on their own demand scrutiny from the Department of Health and Human Services and a discontinuation of their existing grant.

Calla Hales, Charlotte

LTE Tips:

- For local outlets, it's best to have a resident of the area pen a letter to the editor instead of an activist from outside the community.
- Letters can, but don't have to be, responding to a press report that discusses the issue you'd like to comment on. If you're responding to an article, include the title and publication date when you submit your LTE.
- Short and sweet letters are more likely to be published: check the outlet's guidelines, which should be posted on their website, but typically no more than 250 words is recommended.
- Don't just state facts: make it personal. Why do you have a stake in this issue? What unique experience do you bring to their LTE page?
- Need support with your LTE or looking for a sounding board? We're happy to help! Email Reproaction campaign coordinator Tenaja Henson at tenaja@reproaction.org.

Customizable Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Contact: YOUR FULL NAME, EMAIL, PHONE #]

[YOUR CITY] — On [DATE], reproductive rights activists held a protest in front of [NAME OF FAKE CLINIC], one of [NUMBER, IF KNOWN] unregulated crisis pregnancy centers, or anti-abortion fake clinics in [YOUR STATE]. (If your state funds fake with TANF dollars, "Choose Life" license plates, or other state/federal grants, add that here!) These fake clinics deceive and shame people seeking abortion by [name some of the tactics they use that you find most egregious].

[Insert a sentence about who your group is about]

[1-2 quotes from organizers or attendees about why you're taking action, why now – what's your main motivation? Why are you fed up enough to take to the streets?]

[Conclude with how people can find out more about your action and your group]

Feel free to reference Reproaction resource like our blogs or the Fake Clinic Database!

Hopefully you now feel more equipped to take your work in the movement to the next level. We'll see you in the streets and on the tweets!

Reproaction



Reproaction is a direct action group formed to increase access to abortion and advance reproductive justice. We are building power, holding abortion opponents accountable, and giving abortion a permanent seat at the progressive table. Join us at

www.reproaction.org.

We've been hard at work:

Since Reproaction released its first toolkit in October 2017, we've made huge strides to reveal the truth about anti-abortion fake clinics, and to hold them accountable.

Anti-abortion fake clinics – also known as 'crisis pregnancy centers,' 'pregnancy resource centers,' and sometimes 'pregnancy medical clinics' – are centers that aim to harass, shame, and mislead people seeking abortion care. Though they often look like a real abortion clinic, and even have names with words like "choice" and "options," they actually work to strip away the choices a pregnant person may make in service of their misogynist, controlling, anti-abortion agenda. What's worse? Many of these centers thrive on taxpayer dollars to push their deception and stigma.

Reproaction has been committed since our founding to shining a light on the bad practices of anti-abortion fake clinics, and activating communities to hold them accountable with non-violent direct action, letter-writing campaigns, online actions, original research, and day-to-day tracking of the misdeeds of fake clinic organizations and leadership. We're re-releasing our fake clinic toolkit with enhanced resources, additional information, and a new section detailing the Bad Faith Medicine that fake clinics are pushing more and more each day.

Battling the scourge of fake clinics – especially in an era of 'fake news' and government-led deception campaigns – won't be a cake walk. That's why we're sharing all the tools you need to take on the lies in your community. Join us!

