

The National Health Law Program is pleased to announce the release of its new report, [\*Health Care Refusals: Undermining Quality Care for Women\*](#)

NHeLP's Standards of Care Project is a multi-year initiative to reshape the public debate about refusal clauses (also known as conscience clauses) that recognize the "rights" of health care professionals to refuse to provide information and care that would normally be required in evidence-based medical practice. These legal exemptions also allow institutions such as hospitals, clinics, and insurers to prohibit willing providers from delivering care that meets medical standards.

The report offers a new framework for evaluating refusal clauses and denials of care, hospital mergers, and other transactions when they conflict with accepted and expected medical care. Instead of debating rights, *Health Care Refusals* looks to evidence-based, established medical practice guidelines and evaluates the health consequences of refusals by asking a simple question: Is this good medical care? The findings demonstrate that the answer is a resounding *No!* These policies can and *do* compromise

women's health.

As part of our longstanding commitment to quality care for low income women, NHeLP recognizes that health care refusals have an exponentially greater impact on low-income women who are likely to have fewer choices of providers, to be enrolled in managed care, and to be unable to travel or afford out-of-plan services.

To request hard copies of the report, for technical assistance, or to request a presentation, please contact [Susan Berke Fogel](#) , (310) 204-6010.

## Resources

**Full report:** [\*Health Care Refusals: Undermining Quality Care for Women\*](#) (2010)

**Executive Summary:** [\*Health Care Refusals: Undermining Quality Care for Women\*](#) (2010)

**Issue Brief:** [\*Health Care Refusals and Contraception: Undermining Quality Care\*](#) (Mar '12)

**Paper:** [\*The Limits and Potential of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act \(ACA\) in Promoting Women's Health\*](#) , Susan Berke Fogel and Tracy A. Weitz (2012)

**Press release:** [\*Women at Risk: New Study Finds Health Care Refusals Undermine Medical Standards of Care on Wide Range of Services\*](#) (2010)

**LA Times Blog:** [\*"More women are refused healthcare due to hospital ideology, report says."\*](#)  
May 27, 2010.

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