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2006-11-15T13:10:52Z
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/1746

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ABSTRACT

The South African *Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act 92 of 1996* is regarded as one of the most liberal abortion laws in the world. It aims to uphold the rights of women as equal citizens, give effect to their rights to reproductive healthcare and redress past discriminatory legislation. Conscientious objection by healthcare providers to terminating pregnancies is also allowed in terms of the act.

This research report considers the justification for the right of conscientious objection by the healthcare provider in the face of the conflicting claims of a pregnant woman seeking abortion. There are good reasons for a pregnant woman's right to terminate pregnancy, just as they exist for the healthcare provider who objects, on grounds of conscience, to involvement in the process. I will attempt to balance these sets of rights, weigh priorities, and offer possible solutions.

A focus on the unique value of each individual demands that each one be accorded dignity and respect. Thus ways of minimizing conflict are explored. Though compromise may be required, it is important that healthcare workers have the freedom to live their lives with integrity.