

General Practitioners' Attitudes to Abortion 2007

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Results

- Sex: 55% male & 45% female
- Age: 21% < 40 years; 50% 40-49 years; 28% 50 + years
- Religion: majority Christian / Protestant, then Catholic. Also included GPs who are of Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, Sikh, and Buddhist faith
One in four GPs were of no religion

Key Findings

1. Four out of five (80%) doctors said they are 'broadly pro choice', and one in five (20%) said they are 'anti abortion'
2. Over one half (52%) of GPs are in favour of changing the law to give women the right to choose in the first 14 weeks of pregnancy

Key Findings

3. Just over three in five (62%) GPs agreed that it is satisfactory for responsible women under 16 to have abortions without parental consent
4. Almost two thirds (65%) of GPs are in favour of being able to have free abortions on the NHS. But 62% disagree with more than one free abortion service

Key Findings

5. Almost two thirds (66%) of GPs believe the current 24 week time limit for abortion should be reduced
6. Out of those who want a reduction nearly two thirds (62%) of GPs agree between a 20-23 week limit

Key Findings

7. Almost 9 out of 10 (89%) GPs think that abortion services in their area are satisfactory
8. 7 out of 10 GPs (68%) do not agree that GP surgeries should be licensed to dispense the medical abortion pill
9. A number of GPs commented that reduced waiting times could increase the proportion of medical abortions

Changes in Attitudes

- More ambivalence or less supportive
- Less GPs support a change to the law (52% 2007 v 60%1999)
- Less GPs believe they should declare their moral position on abortion to a women seeking one (68% 2007 v 85% 1999)

Changes in Attitudes

- Less GPs agree all women should have access to free abortion on NHS (65% 2007 v 76% 1999)
- More GPs agree that 1967 Abortion Act places an unreasonable burden of responsibility on the GP (2007 26% v 22% 1999)