

Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest

Summer 2009

9th Circuit Reverses Pharmacist Lawsuit

A lawsuit that sought to allow pharmacies to refuse

filling prescriptions of Plan B emergency contraception in the state of Washington has been swatted down by a panel of 9th Circuit judges.

The case, brought by two pharmacists and an Olympia-area pharmacy, sought to throw out a prescription drug policy written by the Washington State Board of Pharmacy in 2007. The old ruling stated individual pharmacists may refuse to distribute drugs based on moral or religious objections, but that the pharmacy was obligated to fill the prescription before the patient left the store, most likely through another employee.

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Tragedy Prompts Security Review

Security is a lot like one's personal health. We take steps to ensure it, but it's easy to take for granted, and one day our world can suddenly change with some bad news.

This was the case on the morning of May 31st, 2009 when the news flashed that a gunman had killed Dr. George Tiller as he was attending church in Wichita, Kansas. Although he did not work for a Planned Parenthood affiliate, Dr. Tiller was a vital resource for women who, tragically, had to seek an abortion very late in their pregnancy.

The first murder of an abortion provider in eleven years brought back memories of the violent days of the 90s, when pro-life radicals obviated the very name of their movement by issuing death. Their goal, then and now, is to spread fear through an entire population. Make no mistake—this is the very definition of domestic terrorism.

In the weeks that followed Dr. Tiller's murder, questions were raised in the media about Planned Parenthood's security measures. Did we have enough? Were we going to hire more security for our health centers? Did we feel safe?

Violent events will always cause an organization to review their safety protocols. The logical questions to ask include: is this a new kind of threat we've never seen before? Are the conditions here similar to what they are in Wichita? And what is the likelihood of a copycat crime happening here?



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Chris Remembers

We all felt a deep loss

in our PPGNW family in June when Jack Greenlaw, our Facilities and Security Director, passed away suddenly at the age of 65. Jack had various health issues in the 13 years he worked with us, but he always seemed to bounce back, so it was a shock this time when he didn't.

Jack was passionately dedicated to Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest. He took deep satisfaction in keeping the patients and staff safe, and would never fail to come up with some wry comment about protesters.

Jack was active in national leadership for Planned Parenthood. His opinion, techniques, and training were all considered gold when the federation's Security Directors got together for their annual conference. People new to the business always sought out Jack for advice, tips, and encouragement.

What I'll remember most about Jack was his friendship. He took his job far more seriously than he took himself. I hope that's taken as the ultimate compliment it's meant to be.

Thank you, Jack. I miss you already.

There is no parsing of language, no sugar-coating of the facts that can hide what we're going through right now. We are dealing with challenges I had never expected to face as we try to sustain the main tenets of our mission. The fallout from this sputtering economy means **more** people are looking to us for medical help with **less** ability to pay for their care.

But as I acknowledge the stiff crosswinds in our path, let me also take a few minutes to extol some significant victories and other steps of progress.

It was hard to contain our excitement when we heard the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals had reversed a lawsuit that would allow pharmacists to come between you and your doctor (*see story page one*). The vast majority of pharmacists in the state of Washington are responsible, dedicated professionals who understand their vital role in our healthcare system. The rules, written by the Washington State Board of Pharmacy in 2007, let individual pharmacists refuse to fill prescriptions based on conscience, but says that another employee of the pharmacy must fill that legal, valid prescription without delay. This is a very reasonable compromise and the 9th Circuit recognized it as such.

Another beacon of light that seems to get brighter all the time is the testing lab built in Bremerton, Washington about two years ago. At the time, the space and the equipment was a considerable investment, but one that started paying dividends immediately.

Instead of sending our patients' samples to expensive contract labs, we're now able to complete tests for gonorrhea and chlamydia at our own facility, and do them both faster and



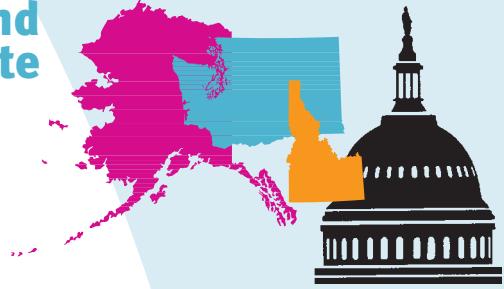
cheaper. We have since expanded the capability of the equipment for other tests such as syphilis (RPR), hepatitis B-surface antibodies, hepatitis B-surface antigens, and thyroid stimulation hormone (TSH).

As we're a much larger affiliate since the merger with Alaska and Idaho, the Bremerton Lab has taken on the mantle of necessity rather than investment. Testing within our affiliate has grown by almost half and the cost savings, even with shipping samples by air freight, are significant. In addition, other Planned Parenthood affiliates in the northwest have contracted the Bremerton Lab for their testing needs. It's good to be able to share this resource with others, and do so with speed and efficiency.

Let's hope the economic indicators start heading north again very soon. Let's hope our friends in Congress remember us when it comes time to vote on health care reform. But let's also never forget that we have things to be thankful for along the way—things that put us in a position of strength moving forward.

Christine R. Charbonneau

Christine R. Charbonneau,
President/CEO



Planned Parenthood & Health Care Reform

With 45.7 million Americans lacking health insurance, Planned Parenthood continues to help fill the growing need for affordable women's health care. Did you know that one in four American women has visited a Planned Parenthood health center in her lifetime?

Planned Parenthood believes that all of us benefit from healthy communities and healthy families in which every person has access to high-quality, affordable, and confidential health care from a provider of their choice. Ensuring such access is a critical step in eliminating the poor health and gross health care disparities experienced by so many in this country. Planned Parenthood supports a health care system that prioritizes prevention, and ensures that all individuals have the information and services they need to stay safe and healthy.

That's why Planned Parenthood is taking an active role in the health care reform debate both in Washington DC and here in the Great Northwest. While the details of the legislation are still under debate, health care reform essentially covers three key areas – health insurance coverage, delivery of health care services, and making sure our economy can handle paying for it.

Planned Parenthood's priorities focus primarily on ensuring that women's health care, including reproductive health care, must be included in any health care reform package. Additionally, women must have access to reproductive health care providers, and finally, women cannot be worse off after health care reform than they are today.

Act Now to Protect Women's Health!

It is critical that your U.S. Senator and Representative hears from you. We need to make it clear to Congress that women's reproductive health care and those who provide essential care must be part of any health reform package. Please call your Senator and Representative in Congress and relay this message today! For more information on Health Care Reform or to get involved locally, please contact ppactionwa@ppgnw.org or call 206.861.7531.

Coalition Forms to Fight Alaska's Parental Notification Initiative

Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest is leading a coalition of organizations opposed to an initiative that would require minors in Alaska to notify their parents before getting an abortion.

Alaskans for Teen Safety, a statewide partnership, is currently looking at a series of challenges to the initiative that they say will unnecessarily put teens at risk. "We believe there are several legal problems with this initiative, including the setting of court rules. Our lawyers are now taking a close look at our options," says Clover Simon, VP of Alaska for Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest.

Similar initiatives in California, Colorado, and other states have recently been defeated by voters. As in those states, the Alaska initiative contains a judicial bypass, meaning a young woman would have to get a judge's clearance to get around the law. Simon continued: "Think about it. In the middle of winter, scared pregnant teens, especially those in rural Alaska, won't even be able to get to a courthouse, let alone navigate it once they get there. It's asking a lot of these young women, who can't speak to their own parents, to go speak with a judge. Teens don't need a judge. They need counseling and good medical care, without delay," said Simon.

Security Review

from page 1

Using these last questions as guides, we were able to answer the first ones with assurance.

- The safety and security of our patients and staff is our number one priority.
- We have security measures in place that have been reviewed and rehearsed. (For obvious reasons, we do not release the details of security plans to the public.)
- We enjoy a very good relationship with local (Police, Sheriff, and Fire Departments) and federal (FBI) law enforcement. These relationships are constantly being updated and reinforced.

Our health centers and administration offices are built to resist specific attacks, but security is the continuing responsibility of all staff members. Along with the safety of patients, we must consider the safety of the people we're educating and the safety of our volunteers. Anyone who works for PPGNW is given a security practicum tailored to their emphasis or department.

Perhaps the most dedicated group of volunteers we have is our Patient Escorts. These are the people who, when protesters are present, don yellow vests that say "Planned Parenthood" and ask people who pull up in our parking lots if they would like someone to walk them to the front door. The Escorts use large golf-sized umbrellas to visually shield patients from the protesters on the sidewalk who seek to harass our clients with verbal abuse and cameras.

(To find out more information about how you can become a Patient Escort, please call our Volunteer Hotline at (206) 328-7713 or email us at volunteer@ppgnw.org. Patient Escorts must be trained for their positions.)

The murder of Dr. Tiller was a sobering reminder that some people will stop at nothing to further their ideological agenda. In the face of this tragedy, we are resolved to continue our mission, to provide vital health care to thousands of men, women, and teens in the Great Northwest, and we refuse to succumb to the fear tactics of the few.





Tribute to Dr. Tiller



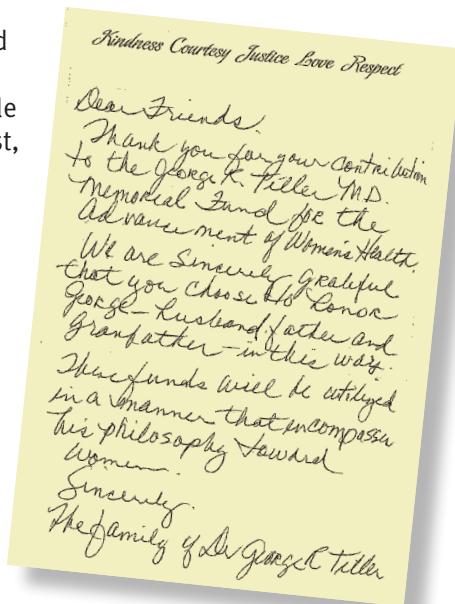
On Sunday, May 31st, 2009, a gunman took the life of Dr. George Tiller as he was attending his church in Wichita, Kansas. A lightning rod for anti-choice forces, Dr. Tiller was both physically and legally targeted most of his professional life because he provided late abortions to women in desperate need of care. Dr. Tiller was 67 years old.

George R. Tiller was born in Wichita at Wesley Hospital where he later became president of the medical staff. He attended the University of Kansas on a swimming scholarship and graduated from the University's School of Medicine in 1967. Dr. Tiller served his country in the late 60s as a U.S. Navy Flight Surgeon.

He returned to Wichita in 1970 to assume the family medical practice after the death of his father. He founded Women's Health Care Services and began providing abortions after Roe v. Wade made the procedure legal in 1973. He was a member of the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the National Abortion Federation, and many other national organizations.

The service Dr. Tiller provided was underappreciated by many, but never by the people who counted on him the most, his patients. To them he was known for his compassion, care, and skill. The walls of his medical office in Wichita were lined with letters of thanks from the women he helped.

Inset on this page is a copy of the note Dr. Tiller's family sent to us after PPGNW made a contribution to his family foundation.



Our Friend Jack

It is with a great sense of sadness and loss that we must announce the all too sudden passing of Jack Greenlaw, PPGNW's Facilities and Security Director. For more than 13 years, Jack's job was to make sure the buildings we lease or own were in good working order, and more importantly, safe for patients and staff.

Jack was passionate and studious about security. He seemed to have an innate sense for situations that could compromise our safety. When something didn't look right, feel right, or smell right, Jack was there to nip it in the bud. He never let us get lackadaisical about security. He continually updated security protocols and ensured staff would be ready in a minor or major event.

Jack's leadership went beyond his responsibilities at PPGNW. His distinct voice was present at annual conferences and his influence was often felt at the Federation level. He enjoyed helping new security officers at other affiliates. His training presentations are used throughout the Federation.

Jack's attention to detail and watchful eye will be missed. More than that, we will miss his heart, his humanity, and his sense of humor. It was impossible to read one of his emails without hearing his gravelly voice in your head. It's certain that if he could send us one last message, it would be the words that ended his emails.

Be safe.

Write in Me

We have placed "Write in Me" journals in the waiting rooms of our health centers hoping our patients would tell us their thoughts about Planned Parenthood and why they're here. Their anonymous words show a wide range of emotion and remind us again how necessary our services are to the community.

This is the third time I've been (besides the music it's not so bad sitting here). My first time here was for a friend to get a pregnancy test, the second time was so I could get tested. It was positive and I was terrified. But I was going to be a mommy and even though my life was a little chaotic I was ready and so happy. Six weeks later I was diagnosed with a tubal pregnancy, which means the baby wasn't where it was supposed to be. I spent 6 hours in the operating room. They had to terminate my pregnancy before it burst and I bled to death. So here I am, 4 days later, waiting for my fiancé to get done. I'm exhausted still and a little sick from all the meds they have me on. But I'm better now. I'm OK, I think. In 2 months we can try again and this time I pray everything will be okay.

For those of you in here for pregnancy tests, just breathe. If you are, good luck! If you're not, be safe and smart next time. OK?

No baby...I hope. I just turned 18 two months ago and I can't even afford my bills. I moved out when I was 17, in Oct. of 2008 – now it is Mar. 2009 and I didn't think I would hate it so much. I've always found a way to get by – I'm a registered nursing assistant. I help the old and I love my friends and family but at this time I have tickets to pay, bills, more bills, and food to buy. No baby can come into this world of mine. Not yet, at least.

EMR Takes Next Step

It's been a long time in the making, but now electronic medical records (EMR) are beginning to become reality at Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest. And when they do, it will usher in an era of efficiency, patient convenience, and affiliate-wide unity.

Very simply put, EMR is a computer/online-based replacement for the stacks of paper medical records that have clogged file cabinets in our health centers for decades. Patients who wanted to use other health centers, even within our affiliate, were virtual strangers to that staff. All that's about to change.

The goals for implementing EMR are:

- **Improving quality of patient care** by giving health center staff the ability to access any patient record at any time from any PPGNW location.
- **Improving operational efficiency** with workflow upgrades resulting from electronic lab interfaces and comprehensive management reports.
- **Improving customer service** for health center patients with the ability to send charges directly to billing software.
- **Providing an improved workplace** for PPGNW employees by eliminating manual tasks such as faxing, record pulls, and phoning for information.

So when will this all take place? It's important to understand what a vast software upgrade this entails. And as a result, computers and bandwidth (the amount of information that can be exchanged) must be upgraded as well. The plan calls for preparing our health centers with the above improvements for the remainder of the year. Starting in January of 2010, EMR will be rolled out at certain sites where employees have more experience. Full EMR integration is expected to be completed by April of 2011.

This process is both expensive and time-consuming, but the benefits far outweigh the inefficiencies of doing things the old way. This kind of innovation allows us to work with emerging technologies and ensures our ability to move forward with our mission. As always, PPGNW is grateful for your support of these and other improvements to our patient's care and convenience.



Oak Harbor Manager Honored

Soroptimist International of South Whidbey Island has named PPGNW's Oak Harbor Health Center Manager, Bernita Sanstad, the recipient of the 2009 Making a Difference for Women award. Each year, the Soroptimists honor "a woman who, through personal or professional efforts, is making an extraordinary difference in the lives of women and girls."

The honor was bestowed at an award presentation for the organization on May 21st.

Bernita has worked for PPGNW for the last 24 years, and has been our health center manager in Oak Harbor, Washington for over 13 years. Her tireless work, at the health center level as well as in the community, has earned her the admiration and respect of her peers. Her enthusiasm is infectious and her dedication speaks for itself.

It's nice to know other organizations outside of PPGNW recognize Bernita's unique contributions. We've known what a gem she is for over 24 years.

Can Donations be Designated to a Local Health Center?

The desire to support your neighborhood Planned Parenthood health center comes from a good place. You want your money to help the women, men, and teens in your community. But restricting funds to one specific health center is not necessarily a good thing. Here's why:

When you look at Planned Parenthood more closely, you'll see that we're more than just a series of connected health centers. We are an organization that provides health care, education, and advocates for your rights to policymakers. When we merged recently to create Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest, we knew that we were bringing the collective power of one of the largest affiliates in the country to work on our region's healthcare issues.

What does this collective power mean? It means we can more effectively buy medical supplies and equipment. We can hire medical staff, educators, and field organizers with close ties to the community. We can improve facilities that need repair. In the case of Juneau, build a health center where none previously existed.

In short, we can do more for all of our communities—from the largest urban centers to the rural and underserved areas.

When you donate to Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest, you are supporting your local health center by helping to fund an organization with a mission that brings high quality reproductive healthcare to your community and other communities in our region.

Pharmacist Lawsuit Reverses from page 1

The challenge lead to these rules being suspended by U.S. District Judge Ronald Leighton, effectively allowing pharmacists to refuse Plan B until the case was settled. The 9th Circuit reversal means the Pharmacy Board's rules go back into effect later this summer.

In its decision, the court used the Free Exercise Law, applicable through the Fourteenth Amendment, saying the Clause "embraces two concepts: freedom to believe and freedom to act. The first is absolute but, in the nature of things, the second cannot be. Conduct remains subject to regulation for the protection of society."

The case has been remanded back to the District Court, with instructions for Judge Leighton to more heavily weigh the Free Exercise Law into his decision. All this suggests that while rules requiring pharmacies to fill valid prescriptions are not yet set in stone, the concrete is rapidly drying.

These positive developments are the result of a lot of hard work done by people in and around Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest. Thanks must be given to former Legal Advance Team Director Kelly Reese, as well as to staff attorneys Roberta Riley and Laura Einstein of PPGNW. More congratulations and thanks go to attorneys Lisa Stone and Sara Ainsworth of Legal Voice, a non-profit firm committed to women's issues. Finally, the work of Seattle law firms Perkins Coie, and Orrick, Herrington, & Sutcliffe must be recognized.

Future challenges to the rules may be brought as opponents say they may try to take the issue to the U.S. Supreme Court. But until they do, patients in the state of Washington will not be denied their legal and valid prescriptions based on the religious views of someone who is not their doctor.



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Visit our website

www.ppgnw.org

Workplace Campaigns: Remember Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest!

Workplace giving campaigns will soon be getting into full swing at businesses. Please designate your workplace giving to Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest.

By giving to Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest, you'll make a major impact on the lives of women and men across the region. Your support of Planned Parenthood will:

- Prevent unintended pregnancies
- Help stop the spread of STDs
- Empower local teens to make safe, healthy choices
- Protect the right to reproductive choice

Already in 2009 we've seen over 50,000 new clients come through the doors of our health centers.

Please designate your workplace gift to Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest this year, and ensure that women and men in need of care will always find an open door.

For more details about how to designate your workplace gift to Planned Parenthood, go online to www.ppgnw.org. Interested in having Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest represented at your next workplace giving event? Please contact Brian Cutler at 206.328.7737.