

## STATUS OF ABORTION SERVICES IN NELSON

*Written by: Shannon Lanaway*

Well the issue of the loss of abortion services here in Nelson is not a simple story. From my own research as the chair of the West Kootenay Women's Association, I have gleaned information from various sources. What I have realized is that the issue is not one that too many people want to discuss. From my incomplete understanding of the issue, it appears women seeking information on this choice must first be referred to Dr. Moola Shiraz, the obstetrician and gynecologist for this area. Dr. Moola will then refer women to the Trail hospital where one of two doctors from Rossland will provide the required abortion services.

The simple answer is that adequate abortion services are not offered here in Nelson., which simply has to change in order to meet the health needs of women in our community. Ten years ago when a similar situation existed, the women of the volunteer Coordinating Collective of the West Kootenay Women's Association attempted to fundraise to secure funding to have doctors in Nelson train in the medical procedure required to offer Abortions Services. It was a great idea ten years ago and it's a great proactive idea today. Those individuals interested in this subject please contact Shannon Lanaway at 352-9916. Plan B a less nauseating alternative to Ovril the morning after pill, is available through public health. Scheduling an appointment is recommended. The Options for Sexual Health drop in clinic also provides a subsidized cost of \$15.00 for Plan B. The drop in clinic is opened 5:30 to 8pm every Wednesday on the second floor of the pink Human Resource Building, the entrance is across from the Nelson Municipal Library.

***Does abortion increase risk of breast cancer?*** A recent billboard and transit ad campaign sponsored by anti-abortion groups claims that breast cancer risk substantially increases if a woman has an abortion or defers pregnancy to her 30s. This claim is false, and relies on outdated, poorly designed studies and manipulated statistics to scare women. **All women have the right to be presented with pregnancy options in a non-judgmental, unbiased manner.** Bias, misinformation, and coercion are a violation of the fundamental rights of women. The Anti-choice movement commonly uses misinformation to scare women out of having abortions. Of the many false statements presented as fact, one of the most common is the link between breast cancer and therapeutic abortion. However, after evaluating current, reliable evidence on the subject, the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada A.R.C.C. in agreement with the vast majority of all reputable medical associations, believes that there is no link between therapeutic abortion and the development of breast cancer.

This statement was taken from the 2005 Position Paper #70, "Abortion and Breast Cancer: An Evidence based Perspective". For further information about the Abortions Rights Coalition in Canada contact: [www.arcc-cdac.org](http://www.arcc-cdac.org) The Options for Sexual Health website is another invaluable resource [www.optionsforsexualhealth.org](http://www.optionsforsexualhealth.org) MS, Bitch, Bust (US) and Herizons (Canadian) magazines offer a wealth of well researched information and news on what has taken place in various states in the U.S. concerning access to birth control and access to abortion services. Remaining positive, supporting one another, being educated and staying current is our best position as people. I also encourage women and men to talk to their doctors about this issue, ask questions and keep asking them until they are completely clear on the answers.