

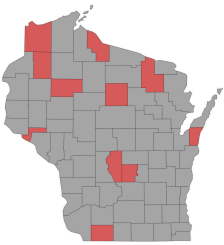
BRIEF SNAPSHOT

The impact of the *Dobbs* decision on the ob-gyn workforce in Wisconsin

August 2024

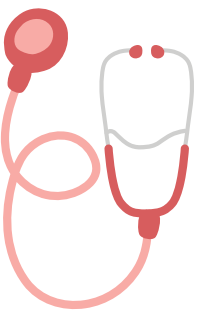


This snapshot summarizes a [CORE brief](#) presenting evidence that the June 2022 U.S. Supreme Court *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision may worsen access to obstetricians-gynecologists (ob-gyns) in Wisconsin and nationwide.



Why access to obstetric providers matters

Eleven of Wisconsin's 72 counties (15%) are maternity care deserts without birthing facilities or care providers. Maternity care deserts and poor access to providers can delay the start of prenatal care, increase travel time to obtain care, and harm the birthing person and their baby. With more hospitals closing birthing services in Wisconsin, pregnant people in rural communities face unique challenges getting care. Access to care is critically important for people of color — and in particular, Black people — due to Wisconsin's pregnancy and birth equity crises.



Impact of *Dobbs* on the current ob-gyn workforce

In soon-to-be-published CORE research, ob-gyns expressed concern that Wisconsin's abortion-related laws and healthcare landscape make it harder to recruit, train, and keep ob-gyn doctors in the state. Many of the ob-gyns also reported that Wisconsin's landscape makes it difficult to care for patients and practice medicine. These effects could worsen maternity care deserts in Wisconsin, as well as the overall quality of ob-gyn care.



Impact of *Dobbs* on the future ob-gyn workforce

Studies have shown that in the post-*Dobbs* world, as many as half of newly trained ob-gyns do not want to practice in a state with abortion restrictions, such as Wisconsin. Many future ob-gyns don't want to get trained in restrictive states, either. Wisconsin witnessed an 8% drop in applications for ob-gyn residency training programs in 2023, followed by a 10% drop in 2024.



Bottom line

Growing evidence shows that the *Dobbs* ruling may worsen access to ob-gyns in states with abortion restrictions, such as Wisconsin. Maternity care deserts and extreme inequities in pregnancy and infant health for Black people in our state may worsen if Wisconsin loses pregnancy healthcare providers and other doctors.