



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on December 24, 2010

## UW Hospitals and Clinics Ends Plan for Late-Term Abortions

The University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics (UWHC) confirmed that it is giving up its plans to create a clinic in Madison that would provide late-term abortions. In early 2009 the board of UWHC had approved a plan to build a facility that would provide abortions to women in their second trimester of pregnancy (19 to 22 weeks), with projections for around 125 abortions annually.



The clinic was to have moved in on the business of retiring abortionist Dennis Christensen, who was famous for performing late-term procedures at the Planned Parenthood abortion center where he worked.

While a [letter from the Wisconsin Department of Justice](#) surfaced in May indicating that UWHC had stopped pursuing the plan, UWHC stated publicly that it had not given up yet, despite intense pressure from state and national pro-life groups, as well as indications from a majority of the anesthesiologists working at the Madison Surgery Center that they would not take part in the abortions (which would have made the abortion plan difficult to implement).

Finally, on December 14 UWHC spokesman Lisa Brunette officially announced that the plan — which had the backing of UW Hospital, the UW Medical Foundation, and Madison's Meriter Hospital — had been scrapped, citing in part concerns over protests from those opposing abortions. "We want to make sure anyone going into that building is safe from harm and has their privacy respected," Brunette said, adding that the groups would not be seeking another location for the facility.

Peggy Hamill of the group [Pro-Life Wisconsin](#) said the announcement confirmed what pro-life activists had suspected for nearly a year. Hamill applauded the physicians and other medical staff at the Madison Surgery Center who publicly opposed the plan, adding, "Wisconsin already has one late-term abortion facility in Milwaukee, killing viable babies. Wisconsinites oppose dragging our publicly-funded state university even further into the abortion business."

The Wisconsin pro-life group said that it would continue to operate a special website, [NoUWabortions.com](#), as long as the University of Wisconsin continues to advocate abortion.

Lisa Subeck of Wisconsin's National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) expressed the group's disappointment over UWHC's decision, telling the *Badger Herald* newspaper that "women are seeking abortions after the 18th week. It's particularly devastating to think these women ... will not have access to the service."

According to recent statistics, some 8,200 women in Wisconsin abort their babies each year, with nine



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percent of them waiting until the sixteenth week of pregnancy or later.

In 2009, the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF), a pro-family and pro-life legal group, [sent a letter to UWHC](#) urging it to stop plans for the abortion center, pointing out that the program may represent an unlawful funding of abortion by a state agency. An ADF report said the legal group later “sent [another letter](#) to involved officials regarding a memo they had distributed to employees that said employees could sometimes be forced to assist in the dangerous abortions.” ADF reported that according to public records, “UWHC officials had plotted with Planned Parenthood to get the plan approved before most employees could know.”

ADF legal counsel Matt Bowman said that “Christians and other pro-life medical students and staff shouldn’t be forced to compromise their beliefs to maintain their professions, adding that UWHC and its partners “made the right decision to terminate this covert program, which threatened to require pro-life employees to participate, against their conscience, in the killing of preborn, developed babies.”

ADF noted that in recent years researchers at UWHC have performed experiments on body parts from late-term pre-born babies who were killed at nearby facilities. “If the new practice had been implemented,” reported ADF, “that class of abortions would have been performed under UWHC’s joint venture. The plan would have also included the abortion of disabled babies, which already occurs at Meriter Hospital.”



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