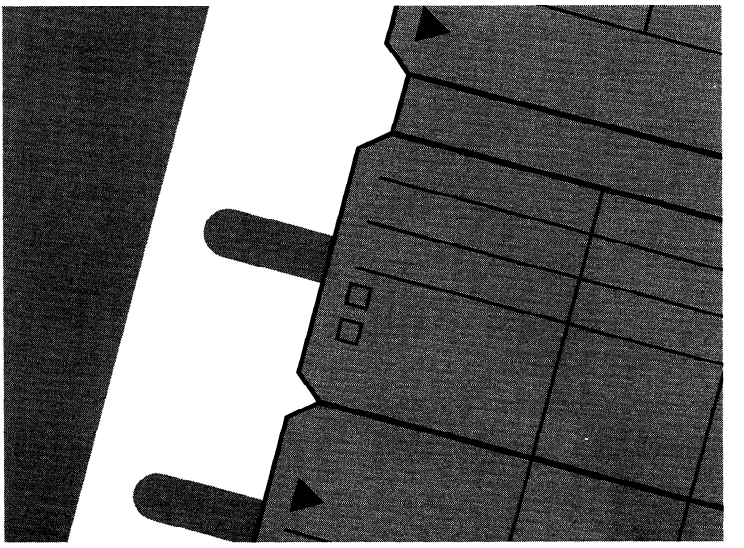
Handbook on the Reporting of Induced Termination Of Pregnancy

Reprinted from 1988, Includes Revised Instructions and Reporting Form, 1997



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Health Statistics

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Preface

This handbook is prepared by the National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and contains instructions for persons with responsibilities for completing and filing reports of induced terminations of pregnancy (induced abortions). It pertains to the 1989 revision of the U.S. Standard Report of Induced Termination of Pregnancy as modified in 1996 by the Division of Reproductive Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion and the 1992 revision of the *Model State Vital Statistics Act and Regulations.* This handbook is intended to serve as a model for adaptation by any vital statistics registration area.

Other handbooks available as references on preparing and registering vital records are:

- *Hospitals' and Physicians' Handbook on Birth Registration and Fetal Death Reporting*
- *Medical Examiners' and Coroners' Handbook on Death Registration and Fetal Death Reporting*
- *Physicians' Handbook on Medical Certification of Death*
- *Funeral Directors' Handbook on Death Registration and Fetal Death Reporting*
- *Guidelines for Reporting Occupation and Industry on Death Certificates*
- *Handbook on Marriage Registration*
- *Handbook on Divorce Registration*

Contents

Introduction

Purpose

This handbook is designed as an aid to acquaint hospital and clinic personnel, physicians, and others with responsibilities related to completing and filing reports of induced termination of pregnancy (induced abortion). Background information is included on the importance of these documents for statistical purposes and specific instructions for recording entries.

The purpose is to achieve improved reporting by promoting better understanding of the forms and of the uses of information entered on them.

Although State laws vary in specific requirements, generally the person in charge of the institution or facility where the induced abortion is performed has the overall responsibility for obtaining the required data, preparing the report, and filing the report with the State registrar. For abortions performed outside a hospital, clinic, or other institution, the physician performing the abortion is responsible for preparing and filing the report.

Importance of induced termination of pregnancy reporting

Reports of induced termination of pregnancy are not legal records and are not maintained permanently in the files of the State office of vital statistics. However, the data they provide are very important from both a demographic and a public health viewpoint.

In January 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the restrictive abortion laws in two States were unconstitutional and that, within the first two trimesters after conception, whether an abortion was to be performed or not was a matter between the woman and her doctor (Roe v. Wade, 410 U.S. 113 (1973); and Doe v. Bolton, 410 U.S. 179 (1973)). The net result of this ruling is that induced abortion under these criteria is legal in all States. In July 1976, the Supreme Court ruled that it is legal for States to require the reporting of certain information about induced abortions performed in that State (Planned Parenthood of Central Missouri v. Danforth, 96 Supreme Court 2831 (1976)). As a result of these two rulings, many States have established mandatory induced abortion reporting systems.

Data from reports of induced termination of pregnancy provide unique information on the characteristics of women having induced abortions. Uniform annual data of such quality are nowhere else available. Medical and health information is provided to evaluate risks associated with induced abortion at various lengths of gestation and by the type of abortion procedure used. Information on the characteristics of the women is used to evaluate the impact that induced abortion has on the birth rate, teenage pregnancy, and out-of-wedlock births. The data also help measure the role that induced abortion plays in birth prevention as compared with contraception. Because these abortion data provide information necessary to promote and monitor health, it is important that the forms be completed carefully.

State reporting requirements

In those States requiring the reporting of information on induced abortions, various methods are used to collect the data. Some States include induced abortion reporting as a part of their fetal death reporting system by collecting additional information on induced terminations on their fetal death report. A majority of the States use a separate form, usually called Report of Induced Termination of Pregnancy, for the reporting of induced abortions. In a few States, a combination system is used whereby induced abortions above a certain gestational age are reported on the fetal death report and those below that gestational age are reported on the induced termination of pregnancy report. However, regardless of the reporting system used, all States with reporting systems require the reporting of all induced abortions regardless of length of gestation.

Because of the variations that exist from State to State, it is imperative that those persons having responsibilities in the reporting of induced abortions familiarize themselves with the procedures and forms used in their State.

Live birth

Although unlikely, the induced abortion procedure may result in a live birth. Should this occur, the report of induced termination of pregnancy is not to be completed and filed. Rather, a certificate of live birth is to be prepared for the infant. In the event the infant should later die, a death certificate would also have to be prepared and filed.

U.S. Standard Report of Induced Termination of Pregnancy

The National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has historically provided leadership and coordination in the development of the

Standard Report of Induced Termination of Pregnancy to serve as a model for use by States. This report has been revised periodically in collaboration with State health officials, registrars, and statisticians; Federal agencies; local registrars, and medical record personnel. In these revisions, each item is evaluated thoroughly for its registration, statistical, health, and research value.

In recent years, responsibility for the collection of abortion data from the official files of the States has rested with the Division of Reproductive Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In 1996, in response to the emerging use of medical procedures to induce abortion, the Division of Reproductive Health, in consultation with a working group of experts, revised Item 15: *Type of Termination Procedure.* The instructions for completing several sections of the form were also revised at this time. This Handbook reflects those revisions.

Each State is encouraged to adopt the recommended standard report as a means of developing a uniform national induced abortion reporting and statistics system. Although many States use the recommended standard report, some States modify it to comply with State laws and regulations or to meet their own particular needs for information.

State health department

The State health department administers the induced termination of pregnancy reporting system under the laws and regulations of the State. The State health department is responsible for developing forms and procedures and for ensuring adherence to the requirements of the laws and regulations. It also publishes statistical data derived from the reports of induced termination of pregnancy it receives.

Local registrar

Generally, the Report of Induced Termination of Pregnancy is filed directly with the State registrar. In a few States, however, these reports are filed with the local registrar who then forwards them to the State registrar.

Confidentiality

The Report of Induced Termination of Pregnancy is designed to collect information for statistical and research purposes only. These reports are not maintained permanently in the official files of the State health department. The data that are gathered from these reports are presented in aggregate statistics, not individually, so that specific individuals may not be identified.

Hospitals, clinics, and physicians are assured that extensive legal and administrative measures are used to protect individuals from unauthorized disclosure of personal information contained on the reporting form.

Specific responsibilities

Hospital or clinic

The hospital, clinic, or other institution or facility where the induced abortion is performed is responsible for obtaining the necessary data, completing the form, and filing it with the State registrar within the time period specified by law. To ensure the proper performance of these responsibilities, it is preferable that one staff member be given the overall responsibility and authority to see that the reports are completed and filed on time. Specifically, the hospital, clinic, or other institution should:

- Develop efficient procedures for prompt preparation and filing of the reports.
- Collect and record the information required by the report.
- Prepare a correct and legible report, making certain that every item is completed.
- File the report with the proper official within the time specified in the vital statistics laws of the State.
- Cooperate with State or local registrars concerning queries on report entries.
- Call on the State or local office of vital statistics for advice and assistance when necessary.

Physician

For induced abortions performed in a hospital, clinic, or other institution, the physician performing the abortion is responsible for providing the medical information required by the report. When an induced abortion is performed outside a hospital, clinic, or other institution, the physician performing the abortion is responsible for obtaining all of the necessary data, completing the form, and filing it with the State registrar within the time period specified by law.

Part I. General instructions for completing reports

The data necessary for preparation of the induced termination of pregnancy report are obtained from the:

- Patient
- Attending physician
- Hospital or clinic records

Reports of induced termination of pregnancy are not permanent records and are used only for statistical purposes. However, the data obtained from these reports are very important from both a demographic and a public health viewpoint. Therefore, it is essential that these reports be prepared accurately. These general rules should be followed:

- File the original report with the registrar. Reproductions or duplicates are not acceptable.
- Avoid abbreviations except those recommended in the specific item instruction.
- Spell entries correctly.
- Refer problems not covered in these instructions to the State office of vital statistics.
- Use the current form designated by the State.
- Type all entries whenever possible. Do not use worn typewriter ribbons.
- If a typewriter cannot be used, print legibly in black ink.
- Complete each item following the specific instructions for that item.
- Do not make alterations or erasures.

Part II. Completing the report of induced termination of pregnancy

These instructions pertain to the 1989 revision of the U.S. Standard Report of Induced Termination of Pregnancy.

1–3 PLACE OF TERMINATION

1. FACILITY NAME *(If not clinic or hospital, give address)*

Enter the full name of the hospital or clinic where the induced termination of pregnancy occurred.

If the induced termination of pregnancy occurred in a hospital or a clinic that is physically situated within a hospital or is administratively a part of a hospital, enter the full name of the hospital.

If the induced termination of pregnancy occurred in a freestanding clinic, a clinic that is physically and administratively separate from a hospital, enter the full name of the clinic.

If the induced termination of pregnancy occurred in a physician's office or some other place, enter the number and street name or name of the place.

2. CITY, TOWN, OR LOCATION OF PREGNANCY TERMINATION

Enter the name of the city, town, or location where the pregnancy termination occurred.

3. COUNTY OR PREGNANCY TERMINATION

Enter the name of the county where the pregnancy termination occurred.

Item 1 provides information about the types of facilities where induced terminations are performed. Items 2 and 3 provide information that is used in the planning of health facilities and health education programs.

4. PATIENT'S IDENTIFICATION

Enter the hospital, clinic, or other patient identification number. This number must be one that would enable the facility or physician to access the medical file of this patient.

This information is used with Items 1 and 2 for querying for missing information without identifying the patient.

5. AGE LAST BIRTHDAY

Enter the age of the patient in years at her last birthday.

This information permits analysis of health risks related to length of pregnancy and type of procedure among different age groups. It is also used to study the impact of induced terminations on the fertility rates of different age groups.

6. MARRIED?

☐ Yes ☐ No Specify: _____

Check "Yes" if the patient was legally married (including separated) at the time of conception, at the time of termination, or at any time between conception and the termination. Otherwise, check "No."

This information is used to study the health risk of induced terminations by marital status. It also helps determine the impact of induced terminations on the fertility rates of married and unmarried women and aids in planning for and evaluating the effectiveness of family planning programs.

7. DATE OF PREGNANCY TERMINATION (*Month, Day, Year*)

Enter the exact month, day, and year of the pregnancy termination.

The date the pregnancy was actually terminated should be entered. This may not necessarily be the date the procedure was begun. *Exception*: For termination procedures performed by medical (nonsurgical) methods, the date of the termination should be recorded as the actual date the *initial* dosage of the medication was given—not the actual date of termination of pregnancy.

Enter the full name of the month—January, February, March, etc. Do not use a number or abbreviation to designate the month.

This information is used to determine when the pregnancy termination occurred and to determine the length of gestation. Length of gestation is an essential element in the study of risks associated with induced terminations.

8a–e RESIDENCE OF PATIENT

The patient's residence is the place where her household is located. This is not necessarily the same as her "home State," "voting residence," "mailing address," or "legal residence." The State, county, and city should be that of the place where the patient actually lives. Never enter a temporary residence such as one used during a visit, business trip, or a vacation. Residence for a short time at the home of a relative or friend is considered to be temporary and should not be entered here. Place of residence during a tour of military duty or during attendance at college is *not* considered temporary and should be entered as the place of residence of the patient on the report.

If the patient has been living in a facility where an individual usually resides for a long period of time, such as a group home, mental institution, nursing home, penitentiary, or hospital for the chronically ill, this facility should be entered as the place of residence.

8a. RESIDENCE—STATE

Enter the name of the State where the patient lives. This may differ from the State in her mailing address. If the patient is not a resident of the United States, enter the name of the country and the name of the unit of government that is the nearest equivalent of a State.

8b. RESIDENCE—COUNTY

Enter the name of the county where the patient lives.

8c. RESIDENCE—CITY, TOWN, OR LOCATION

Enter the name of the city, town, or location where the patient lives. This may differ from the city, town, or location in her mailing address.

8d. RESIDENCE—INSIDE CITY LIMITS? *(Yes or no)*

Enter "Yes" if the location entered in item 8c is incorporated and the patient's residence is inside its boundaries. Otherwise, enter "No."

8e. RESIDENCE—ZIP CODE

Enter the ZIP Code of the place where the patient lives.

These items provide data for the analysis of induced termination by residence of the patient. This information is used with the city and county of termination to provide information on the amount of movement occurring within a State or between States to obtain an induced termination of pregnancy. This type of information is useful in planning the location of health care facilities.

9. OF HISPANIC ORIGIN?

(Specify No or Yes—If yes, specify Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, etc.)

☐ No ☐ Yes Specify: _____

Check "No" or "Yes." If "Yes" is checked, enter the specific Hispanic group as obtained from the patient. Do not leave this item blank. The entry in this item should reflect the response of the patient.

For the purposes of this item, "Hispanic" refers to people whose origins are from Spain, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, or the Spanish-speaking countries of Central or South America. Origin can be viewed as the ancestry, nationality, lineage, or country in which the patient or her ancestors were born before their arrival in the United States.

There is no set rule as to how many generations are to be taken into account in determining Hispanic origin. A patient may report Hispanic origin based on the country

of origin of a parent, grandparent, or some far-removed ancestor. The response should reflect what the patient considers herself to be and is not based on percentages of ancestry. Although the prompts include the major Hispanic groups of Cuban, Mexican, and Puerto Rican, other Hispanic groups can also be identified in the space provided.

If a patient indicates that she is of multiple Hispanic origin, enter the origins as reported (for example, Mexican-Puerto Rican).

If a patient indicates that she is Mexican American or Cuban American, enter the Hispanic origin as stated.

This item is not a part of the Race item. A person of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Each question, Race and Hispanic origin, should be asked independently.

Hispanics comprise the second-largest minority in this country. This item provides data to measure differences in pregnancy outcome and variations in health care for people of Hispanic and non-Hispanic origin. Without collection of data on persons of Hispanic origin, it is impossible to obtain valid demographic and health information on this important group of Americans.

Some States may wish to obtain data on other groups or may have a very small Hispanic population. Therefore, they may opt to include a general Ancestry item on their report instead of a specific Hispanic origin item. Instructions for the general Ancestry item follow:

ANCESTRY—Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, African, English, Irish-German, Hmong, etc. *(Specify)*

Enter the ancestry as obtained from the patient. Do not leave this item blank. The entry in this item should reflect the response of the patient.

For purposes of this item, ancestry refers to the nationality, lineage, or country in which the patient or her ancestors were born before their arrival in the United States. American Indian or Alaskan Native ancestry should be entered as such.

There is no set rule as to how many generations are to be taken into account in determining ancestry. A person may report ancestry based on the country of origin of a parent, grandparent, or some far-removed ancestor. The response should reflect what the patient considers herself to be and is not based on percentages of ancestry.

Some persons may not identify with the foreign birthplace of their ancestors or with a nationality and may report "American." If, after clarification of the intent of this item, the patient still feels that she is an "American," enter "American" on the record.

If a patient indicates that she is of multiple ancestry, enter the ancestry as reported (for example, English-Scottish-Irish, Mexican American).

If she gives a religious group—such as, Jewish, Moslem, or Protestant—ask for the country of origin or nationality.

This item is not a part of the Race item. Both questions, Race and Ancestry, should be asked independently. This means that for certain groups—such as Japanese, Chinese, or Hawaiian—the entry will be the same in both items. The entry should be made in both items even if it is the same. However, an entry of "Black" or "White" should never be recorded in the ancestry item.

10. RACE

☐ American Indian ☐ Black ☐ White

☐ Other *(Specify)* _____

Check the box that describes the race of the patient. The entry in this item should reflect the response of the patient.

If the patient is not American Indian, Black, or White, check "Other" and specify the race on the line provided.

For Asian or Pacific Islanders, enter the national origin of the patient, such as Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, or Hawaiian.

If the patient is of mixed race, check "Other" and enter both races or origins.

Information on race is needed to study the impact of induced terminations on the birth, fertility, and out-of-wedlock rates of different racial groups.

11. EDUCATION *(Specify only highest grade completed)*

Elementary/Secondary *(0–12)* _____ College *(1–4 or 5+)* _____

Enter the highest number of years of regular schooling completed by the patient in either the space for elementary/secondary school or the space for college. An entry should be made in only one of the spaces. The other space should be left blank. Report only those years of school that were completed. A person who enrolls in college but does not complete one full year should not be identified with any college education in this item.

Count formal schooling. Do not include beauty, barber, trade, business, technical, or other special schools when determining the highest grade completed.

This item is an important indicator of socioeconomic status of the patient. This information is used for studying the effect of induced terminations on the health and fertility of various educational and socioeconomic groups. This information is also useful in planning educational programs that address family planning.

12. DATE LAST NORMAL MENSES BEGAN *(Month, Day, Year)*

Enter the exact date (month, day, and year) of the first day of the patient's last normal menstrual period, as obtained from the hospital or clinic record or the patient herself.

Enter the full name of the month—January, February, March, etc. Do not use a number or abbreviation to designate the month.

If the exact day is unknown but the month and year are known, obtain an estimate of the day from the patient, her physician, or the medical record. If an estimate of the date cannot be obtained, enter the month and year only.

Enter "Unknown" if the date cannot be determined. Do not leave this item blank.

This item is used in conjunction with the date of termination to determine the length of gestation. Gestational age is important in evaluating the effectiveness and safety of the various termination procedures.

13. CLINICAL ESTIMATE OF GESTATION *(Weeks)*

Enter the length of gestation as estimated by the attending physician in completed menstrual weeks. Do not compute this information from the date last normal menses began and date of termination. If the attendant has not done a clinical estimate of gestation, enter "None." Do not leave this item blank. *Exception: For termination procedures performed by medical (nonsurgical) methods, gestational age should be recorded as the gestational age of the pregnancy on the actual date the initial dosage of medication was given.*

This item provides a check on the length of gestation as calculated from date of last normal menses. It permits the physician to report an estimate when there is doubt as to the accuracy of the length of gestation or when date of last normal menses is unavailable or misleading.

14a–d PREVIOUS PREGNANCIES (Complete each section)

14a–b LIVE BIRTHS

14a. Now living

Number _____ ☐ None

Enter the number of children born alive to this patient who are still living at the time of this termination. Do not include children by adoption. Check "None" if all previous children are dead.

14b. Now dead

Number _____ ☐ None

Enter the number of children born alive to this patient who are no longer living at the time of this termination. Do not include children by adoption. Check "None" if all previous children are still living.

14c–d OTHER TERMINATIONS

14c. Spontaneous

Number _____ ☐ None

Enter the number of previous pregnancies that ended spontaneously and did not result in a live born infant. This should not include induced terminations. Check "None" if the patient has had no previous pregnancies or if all previous pregnancies ended in live born infants.

14d. Induced *(Do not include current termination)*

Number _____ ☐ None

Enter the number of previous induced terminations (induced abortions) that this patient has had. Do not include this termination. Check "None" if the patient has had no previous induced terminations.

This information provides a pregnancy history and allows for insight into the use of induced terminations to limit family size. Because this item also collects information on the number of previous induced terminations, it provides some data on characteristics of women who may need alternative methods of family planning.

15. TYPE OF TERMINATION PROCEDURE

(Definitions of certain abortion procedures can be found in Appendix C.)

☐ Suction Curettage

☐ Medical (Nonsurgical), Specify Medication(s) _____

☐ Dilation and Evacuation (D&E)

☐ Intrauterine Instillation (Saline or Prostaglandin)

☐ Sharp Curettage (D&C)

☐ Hysterotomy/Hysterectomy

☐ Other (Specify) _____

Check the box that describes the procedure that actually terminated this pregnancy. Check only one box. If a procedure not listed was used, check "Other" and specify on the line provided.

This item provides information on the frequency of specific procedures and the incidence of terminations involving multiple procedures. When used in conjunction with length of gestation it provides an indication of the safety, appropriateness, and health risks of the various termination procedures at different gestational ages.

16. NAME OF ATTENDING PHYSICIAN *(Type/Print)*

Enter the full name of the attending physician. Be sure to spell it correctly and verify correct spelling. This item is used to query for missing or additional information.

17. NAME OF PERSON COMPLETING REPORT *(Type/Print)*

Enter the full name of the person completing this report.

This is the primary person who is queried for missing information on the report, although the physician is contacted in some instances.

Appendixes

Appendix A

U.S. Standard Report of Induced Termination of Pregnancy

TYPE/PRINT IN PERMANENT BLACK INK FOR INSTRUCTIONS SEE HANDBOOK

U.S. STANDARD

REPORT OF INDUCED TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY

STATE FILE NUMBER

1. FACILITY NAME (if not clinic or hospital, give address)	2. CITY, TOWN, OR LOCATION OF PREGNANCY TERMINATION	3. COUNTY OF PREGNANCY TERMINATION
Merrywood Clinic	Louisville	Jefferson

4. PATIENT'S IDENTIFICATION	5. AGE LAST BIRTHDAY	6. MARRIED?	7. DATE OF PREGNANCY TERMINATION (Month, Day, Year)
25466	23	☐ YES ☒ NO	November 20,1997

8a. RESIDENCE-STATE	8b. COUNTY	8c. CITY, TOWN, OR LOCATION	8d. INSIDE CITY LIMITS? (Yes or No)	8e. ZIP CODE
Ohio	Hamilton	Cincinnati	☒ YES ☐ NO	45202

9. OF HISPANIC ORIGIN? (Specify No or Yes – If yes, specify Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, etc.)	10. RACE	11. EDUCATION (Specify only highest grade completed)	
☐ No ☒ Yes Specify: Puerto Rican	☐ American Indian ☐ Black ☒ White ☐ Other (Specify) _____	Elementary/Secondary (0-12)	College (1-4 or 5+)
		12	

12. DATE LAST NORMAL MENSES BEGAN (Month, Day, Year)	13. CLINICAL ESTIMATE OF GESTATION (Weeks)	14. PREVIOUS PREGNANCIES (Complete each section)			
		LIVE BIRTHS		OTHER TERMINATIONS	
		14a. Now Living	14b. Now Dead	14c. Spontaneous	14d. Induced (Do not include this termination)
September 5, 1997	10 weeks	Number _____ ☒ None	Number _____ ☒ None	Number _____ ☒ None	Number _____ ☒ None

15. TYPE OF TERMINATION PROCEDURE (Check only one)

- ☒ Suction Curettage
- ☐ Medical (Nonsurgical), Specify Medication(s) _____
- ☐ Dilation and Evacuation (D&E)
- ☐ Intra-Uterine Instillation (Saline or Prostaglandin)
- ☐ Sharp Curettage (D&C)
- ☐ Hysterotomy/Hysterectomy
- ☐ Other (Specify) _____

16. NAME OF ATTENDING PHYSICIAN (Type/Print)	17. NAME OF PERSON COMPLETING REPORT (Type/Print)
Edmund Matthew Stone, M.D.	Julia Lynn Koval

7-0725

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Appendix B

Definitions of live birth, fetal death, and induced termination of pregnancy

The following definitions are included in the 1992 revision of the *Model State Vital Statistics Act and Regulations*. The definitions of live birth and fetal death conform to the definitions adopted by the Assembly of the World Health Organization.

Live birth—means the complete expulsion or extraction from its mother of a product of human conception, irrespective of the duration of pregnancy, which, after such expulsion or extraction, breathes, or shows any other evidence of life, such as beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles, whether or not the umbilical cord has been cut or the placenta is attached. Heartbeats are to be distinguished from transient cardiac contractions; respirations are to be distinguished from fleeting respiratory efforts or gasps.

Important—If an infant breathes or shows any other evidence of life after complete delivery, even though it may be only momentary, the birth must be registered as a live birth and a death certificate must also be filed.

Fetal death—means death prior to the complete expulsion or extraction from its mother of a product of human conception, irrespective of the duration of pregnancy and which is not an induced termination of pregnancy. The death is indicated by the fact that after such expulsion or extraction, the fetus does not breathe or show any other evidence of life, such as beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles. Heartbeats are to be distinguished from transient cardiac contractions; respirations are to be distinguished from fleeting respiratory efforts or gasps.

Induced termination of pregnancy—means the purposeful interruption of an intrauterine pregnancy with the intention other than to produce a live-born infant, and which does not result in a live birth. This definition excludes management of prolonged retention of products of conception following fetal death.

Appendix C

Definitions of induced abortion procedures

Suction curettage (Also known as vacuum aspiration)—In this procedure the cervical canal is dilated by the successive insertion of instruments of increasing diameter (dilators). When the cervix is sufficiently dilated, a flexible tube (cannula) is inserted into the uterine cavity, and the fetal and placental tissues are then removed using an electric vacuum pump.

Medical (Nonsurgical)—This nonsurgical procedure involves the administration of a medication or medications to induce an abortion. Medications (e.g., methotrexate, mifepristone, misoprostol, etc.) are used most frequently early in the first trimester of pregnancy. However, some medications (e.g., prostaglandin suppositories, injectable prostaglandins, etc.) may be administered during the second trimester of pregnancy to induce abortion. Medications may be administered orally, by injection, or intravaginally.

Dilation and evacuation (D&E)—This procedure, used most frequently in the second trimester of pregnancy (greater than or equal to 13 weeks gestation) involves opening the cervix (dilation) and primarily using sharp instrument techniques, but also suction and other instrumentation such as forceps for evacuation.

Intrauterine instillation (saline or prostaglandin)—This procedure involves either withdrawing a portion of the amniotic fluid from the uterine cavity by a needle inserted through the abdominal wall and replacing this fluid with a concentrated salt solution (known as saline instillation, saline abortion, or saline amniotic fluid exchange) or injecting a prostaglandin—a substance with hormone-like activity—into the uterine cavity through a needle inserted through the abdominal wall (known as intrauterine prostaglandin instillation). The saline instillation process induces labor, which results in the expulsion of the fetus approximately 24 to 48 hours later. The interval between prostaglandin injection and expulsion tends to be shorter than in a saline abortion.

Sharp curettage (D&C) (Also known as dilatation and curettage, D&C, or surgical curettage)—This procedure involves the dilation of the cervix as in the suction curettage procedure, although usually to a larger diameter. The fetal and placental tissues are then removed with a sharp curette.

Hysterotomy/Hysterectomy—Hysterotomy involves surgical entry into the uterus to remove a fetus. Hysterotomy is usually performed only if other abortion procedures fail or if other abortion procedures are not appropriate. Hysterectomy is a procedure in which the uterus is removed (with the fetus inside). It is usually performed only when a pathological condition of the uterus, such as fibroid tumors, warrants its removal or when a woman desires sterilization.

All definitions, except for D&E, are from *Legalized Abortion and the Public Health* (Institute of Medicine, 1975). The definition of D&E is based on NCHS consultation with the Center for Health Promotion and Education, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

All other procedures should be shown as "Other" and the specific procedure listed. This category includes procedures using a combination of agents, such as urea and prostaglandin, prostaglandin and oxytocin, or prostaglandin and saline.

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