FORCE

Facing Hereditary Cancer EMPOWERED

Below is FORCE's response to the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization as it relates to reproductive services for people facing hereditary cancers.

STATEMENT

For 23 years, FORCE has championed access to evidence-based, quality healthcare, while supporting informed decision-making for people affected by inherited mutations linked to cancer. We strongly believe that healthcare decisions should be based on evidence, guidelines and a shared decision-making process between a patient and their healthcare professional.

FORCE's public policy priorities include:

- supporting policies that facilitate equitable and affordable access to and insurance coverage of fertility preservation for any individual of childbearing age who will experience infertility due to surgery or treatment;
- advocating for equitable coverage of related procedures including in vitro fertilization (IVF) and preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) as desired by these patients;
- working towards health equity by addressing the wide range of factors that may contribute to health disparities;
- addressing policies that threaten the safety and privacy of our constituents.

Restrictions on reproductive rights impact the health and well-being of all individuals in the United States. People with inherited mutations linked to cancer face additional burdens due to this ruling:

- Patients with genetic mutations are more likely to be diagnosed with cancer during their pregnancy, and could lose the right to address the risks to their own life as well as the health of the fetus in continuing a pregnancy. This may include decisions related to surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, targeted therapy and immunotherapy. These are highly complex and individual decisions that should be decided by the pregnant individual with expert medical input.
- Reproductive choice and control is a central concern for individuals with a predisposition to genetic diseases as well as for cancer survivors. This ruling is likely to impact access to assisted reproductive technologies, such as:

- *in vitro* fertilization (IVF). This is an important tool in fertility preservation for young women with cancer and those facing risk-reducing gynecologic surgery.

- prenatal genetic diagnosis (PGD). For those with inherited mutations linked to serious diseases such as cancer, PGD allows them to have children free of these mutations. This is particularly important when both parents carry a mutation in the same gene, which may be linked to fatal or serious conditions in the baby. For example: Fanconi anemia is a serious and usually fatal disease that occurs when both parents pass on a BRCA1, BRCA2, PALB2, RAD51C or related gene mutation. Constitutional mismatch repair deficiency (CMMRD) can happen when both parents carry a mutation in the same Lynch syndrome gene. Children with CMMRD syndrome may have blood (hematological) and brain/central nervous system tumors.

- Restricting access to these assisted reproductive technologies will force people to choose not to get pregnant or risk having children with these devastating conditions.

Leaving these decisions to the states will also have a greater impact on those people who are unable to travel, further widening health disparities.

FORCE will continue to work with our partners and healthcare professionals to:

- Monitor the impact on our community of state laws on reproductive rights;
- Inform members of our community about current state and federal laws and their impact on our health and choices;
- Advocate for policies that support equitable access to healthcare for all individuals in the United States regardless of where they live or their economic status;
- Advocate for policies that provide equitable access to evidence-based, guideline-supported options for people affected by hereditary cancers, or inherited cancer risk.

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About FORCE

FORCE improves the lives of the millions of individuals and families facing hereditary breast, ovarian, pancreatic, prostate, colorectal and endometrial cancers. Our community includes people with a BRCA, ATM, PALB2, CHEK2, PTEN or other inherited gene mutation and those diagnosed with Lynch syndrome. We are dedicated to providing up-to-date, expert-reviewed information and resources that help people make informed medical decisions. Our strong, supportive community of peers and professionals ensures no one must face hereditary cancer alone. FORCE serves as a champion, unifying the community and advocating for awareness, access to care and better treatment and prevention options. For more information, visit FORCE's website at www.FacingOurRisk.org.