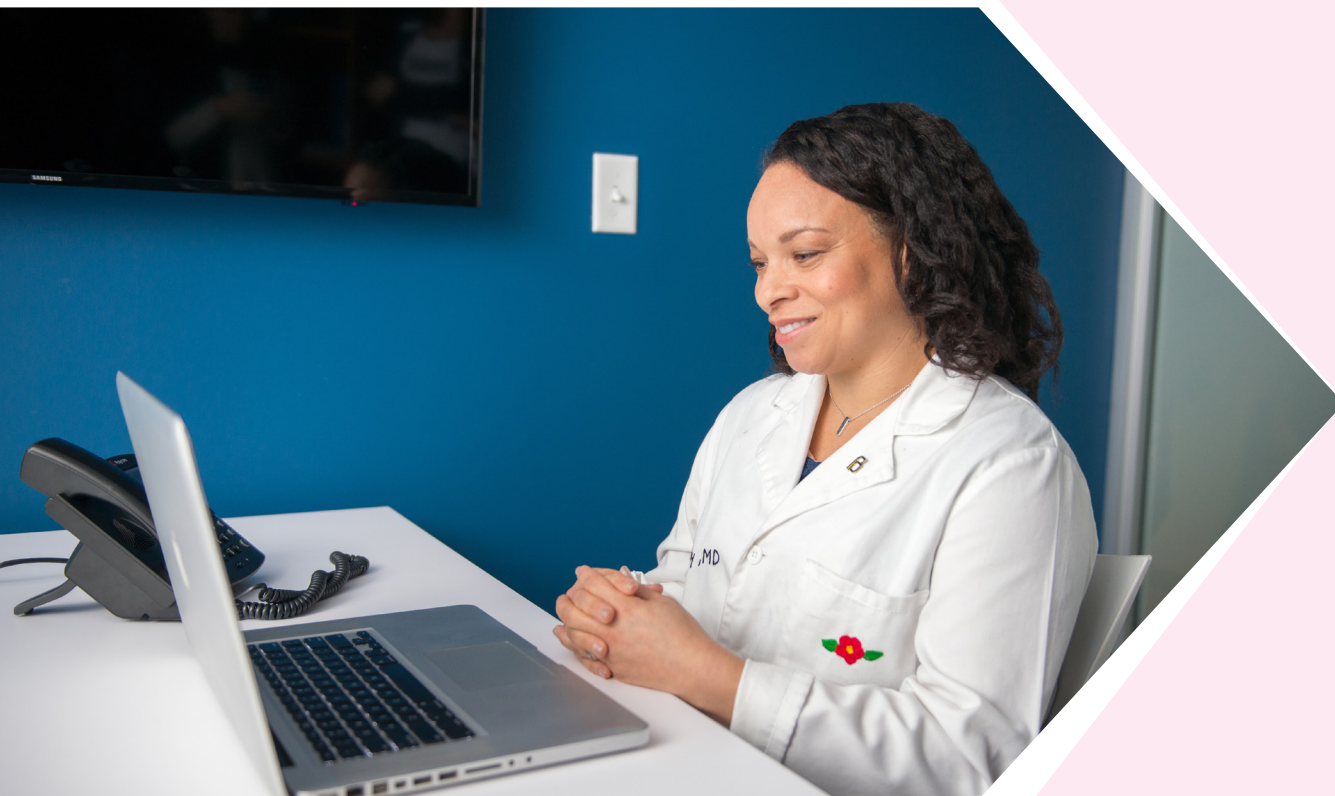


THE CHECKUP

PLANNED PARENTHOOD GULF COAST DONOR UPDATE 2020



Because of you, we'll always be here.

This year has challenged us like never before. From a global pandemic to ongoing hostile litigation in Texas and Louisiana, Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast (PPGC) has faced innumerable obstacles. However, two things remained the same - our commitment to providing affordable, accessible, and compassionate health care to all who need us, and the generous investment of supporters like you who made it possible.

As we all deal with the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic and a fast-changing world, we are beyond grateful to know that we can count on you when it matters most. Health care can't wait - and PPGC will never stop fighting for the communities and patients who need us. The Check-Up will show the impact of your investment on the lives of individuals and families in Texas and Louisiana.

Thank you for seeking a world in which all children are wanted and cared for, all individuals have equal rights and dignity, sexuality is expressed with honesty, equality, and responsibility, and the decision to bear children is private and voluntary. We couldn't do this without you.

In solidarity,

Melaney A. Linton
President & CEO
Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast



PRIMARY CARE

Your support launched a much-needed patient service.

In November 2019, PPGC launched primary care services at the Prevention Park health center in Houston. This made it easier for patients to address all their health care needs in one place.

Primary care helps address and prevent some of the most common health issues such as high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, weight management, and smoking cessation; as well as treatment for acute issues like cold and flu symptoms, urinary tract infections, and

allergies. Mental health is as important as physical well-being, and we are also caring for patients experiencing anxiety and depression.

As with all PPGC initiatives and programs, primary care services were implemented to expand access and to advance our belief that all people deserve high-quality, affordable, and compassionate health care. **"This was the most positive experience I have ever had with a health care appointment,"** said a PPGC primary care patient. "I felt so taken care of and as though my provider truly cared about me."

Thank you for believing that access to essential health care is a right, not a privilege - you power this important work.



"I felt so taken care of and as though my provider truly cared about me."

FROM SEPTEMBER 2019 - JUNE 2020, AT PPGC HEALTH CENTERS: **52,404** health care visits were completed, including **7,418** cancer screenings and prevention services. **6,491** unintended pregnancies were averted through birth control. **69,870** STI tests were administered. **8,680** hours of education were provided. **18,713** supporters engaged in advocacy.





PROVIDING CARE IN A PANDEMIC

Our doors stay open - no matter what.

On April 1, PPGC launched direct-to-consumer telehealth services to ensure patients could access the care they needed, even in a pandemic. Telehealth services are virtual appointments with our providers over a secure video-conferencing platform, which significantly expands access and reduces geographic barriers to care. Patients can get the expert, affordable care they're used to - including birth control, emergency contraception, PrEP refills, gender-affirming hormone therapy, and more - all from the comfort and safety of their

homes. In just four months, PPGC saw 5,875 patients through telehealth.

"The telehealth appointment went way smoother and better than I expected," one patient reported. **"It was very easy and the physician was so nice and beyond helpful!"**

"The nurse practitioner was extremely helpful and informative," said another telehealth patient. "The visit was very personable and extremely convenient being that it was done in the comfort of my home."

In addition to telehealth, PPGC implemented safety protocols enforcing strict social distancing guidelines and requiring face coverings in all health centers, even before it was required by law. And in what has become an increasingly popular patient

service, PPGC also introduced curbside Depo shots at several of our health centers, allowing patients to conveniently maintain their preferred birth control method with limited in-person contact. "I really appreciate the effort they've made to continue services curbside during the pandemic," said one patient in Baton Rouge.

Providing health care during a pandemic is no easy feat, which is why your contributions have been so instrumental in keeping our doors open. "I felt very safe," said a patient in Spring. "I was scared to go anywhere with the COVID-19 pandemic, but they went above and beyond my expectations for safety." Your gift ensures that patients will always get the care they need in a safe, secure, and healthy environment.

TESTIFYING FOR TEKS

PPGC educators and teens speak up for comprehensive sexual education.

On June 29, 2020, three PPGC educators and three young people from the Houston teenREACH program testified to the Texas State Board of Education about the importance of updating the Health Education TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills).

The current Health Education TEKS, which haven't been updated since 1997, adopt an abstinence-only approach and present the topic of birth control from the failure rate only. At PPGC, we know that evidence-based sexual education delivered by trained professionals is extremely effective and widely supported.

"I am here to ask you to care and support all children and all students, regardless of their gender identity and expression or sexual orientation," testified Bernadette Blanco, Director of Education at PPGC. "Please make sure that LGBTQ students, just like everyone else, have access to inclusive curriculums that incorporate their experiences and provide accurate information that is relevant to them, without shaming or passing judgment."

DeBakey High School for Health Professions student Niels spoke about the importance of educating and empowering students. "I know that you all want to help Texas youth," Niels testified. **"Do the right thing for us, and for the state, and include medically accurate and comprehensive sexual health education TEKS. Providing information on the various contraception and STI prevention methods available will empower students - we are your future."**

Your generous investment is building power for the sexual health and reproductive rights movement in Texas. Thank you for advocating for young people to receive the knowledge and care they need to make informed, healthy decisions that will impact the trajectory of their lives.



VIRTUAL LEARNING

PPGC's Education Department is committed to improving the lives of youth, parents, and individuals in Texas and Louisiana through education and training. To keep our communities safe and adapt to a newly virtual world, we modified all learning into online sessions this year. This included our Summer Learning Series, which was held in both Spanish and English for the first time.

This year's Summer Learning Series sessions were also offered to a new audience in addition to youth and parents: adults, educators, and professionals who work with youth. Sessions were offered by age group on topics such as healthy vs. unhealthy relationships, sexually transmitted infections, the basics of birth control, how to talk to your child about sexuality, and supporting students & answering tough questions.

"I wanted to say thank you and let you guys know that my daughter enjoyed the session from beginning to end. It completely changed her mood," one parent said. "We've been home since March and have almost no interaction with anyone outside of our home. **This was really good for her – not only educational, but fun. I'd like her to learn about such important topics and to feel comfortable talking about them.**"

Your support provides critical education programs for people in Texas and Louisiana. When teens and their caregivers are given the information they need to make well-informed and positive decisions, they make their lives, their families – and even the world – better and healthier. Thank you for positively molding the future for generations to come.

SHOUT YOUR VOTE!

The most important action an individual can take to protect their rights is to vote. PPGC holds voter registration drives and facilitates a Get Out the Vote program, both integral in supporting communities with historically suppressed voices, including BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color), people who live in rural areas, LGBTQ people, people with low incomes, and people without health insurance. **Over the past year, PPGC volunteers registered over 350 voters in Texas and Louisiana.**

"Health is multifaceted and is influenced by so many factors beyond the individual. As we see now with the pandemic, it is absolutely crucial that governmental and institutional policies properly reflect the needs of the people – and that their voices are heard and addressed," said New Orleans volunteer Isabelle. "Empowering patients with voter registration is the least we can do to amplify their voices in both Planned Parenthood and our larger New Orleans communities."



"Helping Planned Parenthood with voter registration helps our community," said Houston volunteer Margie. "Elections keep a democratic country functioning, as they give people the right to select their own government. We don't influence anyone as to what party they register for, but feel everyone has the right to vote in this country. Voting lets everyone tell the government what they want in the future."



When you support Planned Parenthood, you are supporting so much more than health care. You are advocating for all people, and all communities, to be empowered and informed. Your difference-making donations are critical in upholding the revolutionary idea upon which Planned Parenthood was founded: a world where people have access to the information and care they need to live strong, healthy lives and fulfill their dreams – no ceilings, no limits.

VICTORY IN LOUISIANA!

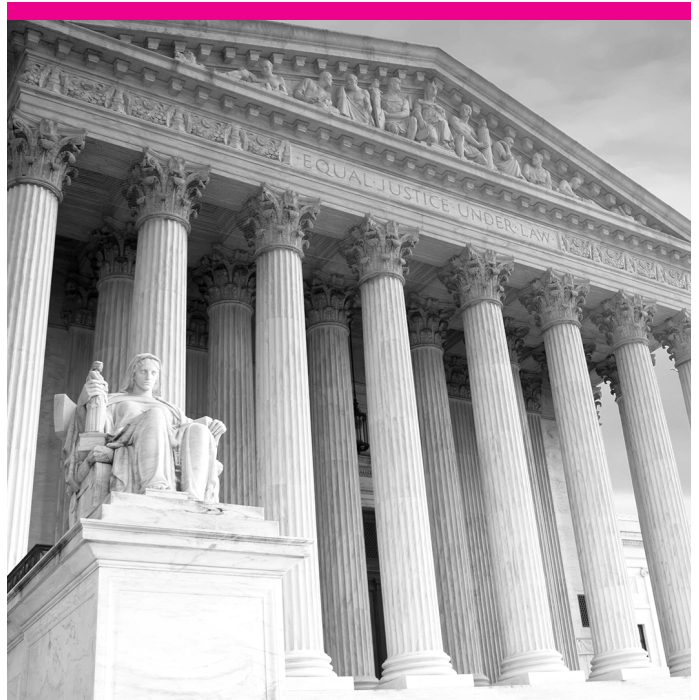
The Supreme Court sent a resounding message to politicians all across the country: Stop trying to make abortion inaccessible.

On June 29, 2020, the Supreme Court, in a 5-4 ruling, struck down Louisiana's medically unnecessary abortion restriction in *June Medical Services v. Russo*, a case brought by the Center for Reproductive Rights on behalf of several independent abortion providers.

The case challenged a Louisiana law requiring abortion providers to have admitting privileges at nearby hospitals – a restriction identical to a Texas law the Court struck down four years ago in *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*. The Court ruled that under that precedent, the identical Louisiana law – which would have decimated access to abortion in the state – could not stand.

For PPGC patient and advocate Julie-Anna of New Orleans, having an abortion meant having the freedom to choose her own destiny. "I was 18 when I found out I was pregnant," she said. "I had left home with the hopes of building a life for myself, and now I was facing the possibility of motherhood. I couldn't imagine it. Despite being raised in an anti-choice household, my desire to live my own life absolutely outweighed everything else."

"When I talk about my abortion, I'm talking about my life. And my life is possible because I was able to get a procedure."



"When I talk about my abortion, I'm talking about my life. And my life is possible because I was able to get a procedure," Julie-Anna said.

While we celebrate this important victory, the fight to protect abortion access is far from over. The latest attack in our service area is Louisiana House Bill 425, a constitutional amendment banning the right to abortion and its funding, which will appear on the ballot in the 2020 presidential election.

If passed, this measure would add language to the Louisiana state constitution that states: "to protect human life, nothing in the present constitution shall be construed to secure or protect a right to abortion or require the funding of abortion." This amendment is unnecessary, harmful, and extreme.

Louisianans have the same rights granted by the U.S. Constitution and deserve to have full bodily autonomy, period. Your support helps protect public policies that ensure access to Planned Parenthood services. Thank you for standing up for access to safe and legal abortion and rejecting restrictions that attempt to strip us of our rights. Together, we can stop the bans.

PPGC in the News:

DR. KUMAR'S IMPORTANT MEDIA EFFORTS

In his role as a spokesperson for Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast and Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Dr. Bhavik Kumar – medical director of primary and trans care at PPGC and abortion care provider at Planned Parenthood Center for Choice – completed 27 media interviews between March and August.

Dr. Kumar has appeared in major national and local news outlets alike: on network television, radio, and podcasts and in print and online. This year, he has spoken to the *New York Times*, *NPR*, *NBC*, *ABC*, *PBS*, *Vogue*, *Newsweek*, and more, and he's even appeared internationally in the *British Medical Journal* and in Spanish-language outlets TV3 and Efe News.

Since March, Dr. Kumar has been interviewed about abortion access during the COVID-19



Photo: Jen Reed/Texas Observer

pandemic, the devastating impact of Gov. Greg Abbott's executive orders temporarily banning abortion in Texas, and the complicated month-long legal battle that ensued. In July, Dr. Kumar also spoke with journalists about the U.S. Supreme Court case *June Medical Services v. Russo*, in which the Court ruled 5-4 to strike down an unconstitutional and medically unnecessary abortion restriction in Louisiana, and about the importance of birth control, trans care, and LGBTQ health.

"There has been so much back and forth with the state, and as a provider in Texas, I know I need to be prepared for another instance when I am forced to stop providing essential care to my patients due to the harmful orders from our state leaders," Dr. Kumar told NBC. "My patients deserve better, and I demand better for them."

Dr. Kumar speaks eloquently and passionately about all of the life-sustaining services PPGC offers our communities thanks to your vital support. By representing Planned Parenthood in the press, Dr. Kumar is leading the charge to raise awareness of our full range of services and educate the public about complex issues and current events related to reproductive and sexual health – and PPGC's critical role in providing and expanding access to essential care.



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