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Pregnancy termination: what psychiatrists need to know

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Objectives: At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

• Define the terms abortion, medication abortion, surgical abortion (dilation and curettage or dilation and evacuation depending on gestational age). Discuss basic history and epidemiology of abortion and abortion healthcare. Review the research on mental health outcomes for women who undergo a pregnancy termination or are prevented from accessing a termination.

• Illustrate through case presentation by Dr. Alison Goulding, Baylor College of Medicine Maternal-Fetal Medicine Fellow, the various scenarios where the standard of care for severe pregnancy complications involves offering pregnancy termination and using shared decision-making to arrive at an individualized management plan.

• Outline the medical education ramifications of Texas’ abortion ban.

• Discuss the ways psychiatrists and other mental health providers can care for their reproductive age patients during this time of several restricted access to comprehensive reproduction care.