

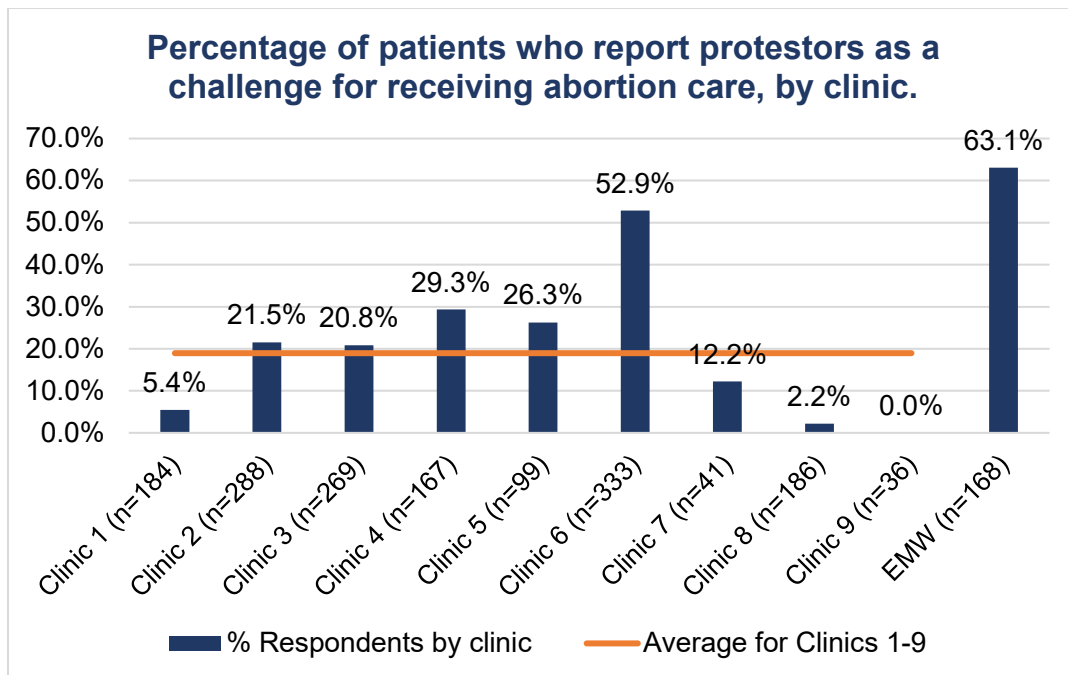


Ohio Policy Evaluation Network

April 30, 2021

OPEN (the Ohio Policy Evaluation Network) is a research collaborative that launched in 2018 to study how policy affects reproductive health and equity in Ohio and surrounding states. OPEN conducts rigorous, impactful, and forward-thinking social-science research on the reproductive health of Ohioans and people in nearby states.

In 2020, OPEN initiated a survey of abortion patients in Ohio, Kentucky, and West Virginia. Under the leadership of Dr. Danielle Bessett (Sociology, University of Cincinnati), recruitment began at EMW Women’s Surgical Center, one of now ten sites, on 9/16/2020 and concluded on 4/7/2021. Participants are eligible for this survey if they are over the age of 18, are seeking abortion at participating clinics, can complete the survey in English, and are a resident of Ohio, Kentucky, and West Virginia. The survey covers a variety of topics related to care seeking, including questions about patient experiences of protests. At the request of EMW, we prepared a report on preliminary survey results in January 2021 and have now updated that report with the complete EMW sample. The survey is ongoing at other sites, and overall numbers should still be considered preliminary.



*Based on responses from 1,771 participants as of 4/28/2021.

Nearly two-thirds of all respondents from EMW reported protestors as a challenge to receiving their care (63.1%), over three times the average for the other clinic in our study (19%). EMW has the highest rate of challenges associated with protestors of all participating clinics.



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Verbatim participant responses related to protesters' impact on emotions and clinic access, open-ended questions

Patients were given the opportunity to provide additional information in open-ended questions. Open-ended questions were optional, and answers to these questions can be understood through the following themes emerged (with examples below).

Negative opinions on the proximity of protesters to clinic:

- *"those disgusting protesters shouldnt be allowed anywhere near the clinic."*

Protesters menacing and threatening patients:

- *"The staff at the clinic was very helpful in every way. I had a volunteer escort me into the building and warned me of which protesters were the worst and got between me and an old lady protester that tried to run at me. Without all of this support I would not have been able to make it through that appointment as well as I did."*

Protesters creating or exacerbating logistical challenges for challenges:

- *"Took a while to find parking lot because of protesters!"*
- *"Finding the entrance to parking was stressful, especially with protesters looking at you."*

Protesters as a factor in coming to clinic, suggestive of potential disinclination when protesters are present:

- *"No protestors outside when I came."*

Challenges of extended exposure to protesters:

- *"Standing outside while others were checked in and having to listen to the protestors."*

Protesters compromising COVID-19 social distancing protocols:

- *"There are protesters outside of this clinic and it is terrible that they are here harassing people! Walking up to people with no mask! During this pandemic. It's ridiculous!"*

No open-ended responses reflected positive comments or experiences with protesters.

For questions or clarification, please contact us at open@osu.edu or (513) 556-4738.