



# WI CAN News Digest

November 15, 2019 – December 14, 2019

## State

### [Palm Hopeful that Senate Will Confirm Her as Head of DHS](#)

Wisconsin Department of Health Services Secretary-designee Andrea Palm is hopeful the Senate will confirm her. Palm has led the state's health agency since January, a position subject to confirmation by the Senate. Last month, Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald (R-Juneau) told reporters that Palm was one of three cabinet secretaries who may have trouble getting support from enough Republican senators. Republican senators have raised concerns that Palm hired a former Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin vice president to her executive team. **12.9.19**

### [Edgewood College Students Protest Removal of Planned Parenthood Links](#)

The administration of Madison-based Edgewood College recently removed information about Planned Parenthood from its webpage listing off-campus health and wellness resources in response to pressure from national conservative groups. Edgewood students have protested in response. **12.6.19**

### [Wisconsin Catholic Conference against Contraception Bill](#)

The Wisconsin Catholic Conference is fighting proposed legislation that would enable pharmacists to prescribe hormonal birth control. While supporters say the bill's passage could save millions of dollars in related unplanned pregnancy costs, Wisconsin Catholic Conference Executive Director Kim Vercauteren says there are other issues beyond the church's teachings. Vercauteren says the Wisconsin Catholic Conference prefers people to practice natural family planning rather than artificial means. **11.27.19**

### [Wisconsin Inches Closer to Expanding Access to Birth Control for Women 18 Years and Older](#)

The Wisconsin Senate is now considering a bill that would enable pharmacists to prescribe hormonal contraception. The bill passed the Assembly on November 7. The bill has faced push back from anti-abortion groups that say the bill encourages sex before marriage and increases the chance of abortion. "I don't think it's a conservative or liberal issue. From a financial standpoint, it is conservative because we spend so much on Medicare and unplanned pregnancy and this is actually a pro-life bill cause it will decrease abortions," explained Representative Joel Kitchens (R-Sturgeon Bay). **11.18.19**

## National

### [Telemedicine in Sexual and Reproductive Health](#)

Telemedicine holds the potential to expand access to contraceptives, STI testing and treatment, and abortion care, yet few individuals use this approach to obtain these services. A new Kaiser Family Foundation analysis

examines the opportunities of telemedicine to expand access to sexual and reproductive health care as well as the policy barriers impeding its expansion. Because each state defines and regulates telemedicine differently, the availability and coverage of services is inconsistent across the country. While no state explicitly prohibits the use of telemedicine for contraception or STIs, 18 states have effectively banned telemedicine approaches to provide medication abortion. The brief also outlines the growing use of telemedicine for contraception and STI care, including a discussion of insurance coverage of telemedicine services, the financial implications for providers and patients, and its potential to improve access to reproductive health care across the United States. **11.22.19**

### [Litigation Challenging Title X Regulations](#)

The Kaiser Family Foundation has published a brief providing an update on the legal challenges to the Trump Administration's new Title X family planning program regulations. These regulations make many changes to the program; notably they disqualify family planning providers who also offer abortion services with non-Title X funds from participating in the program and also ban Title X funded sites from referring patients to abortion services. Attorneys general from 23 states, major family planning organizations, individual providers, and the American Medical Association have sued HHS on the grounds that these regulations violate providers' freedom of speech, create barriers to patients accessing care, impede timely access to services, as well as other constitutional and procedural arguments. The brief details the status of the litigation in different federal courts and explains the key positions of the plaintiffs and the Trump Administration. **11.21.19**