



Regional disparities in the abortion care provided ambulatory or stationary in hospitals in Germany

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Abstract

Background

In 2019, an average of 20.9% of abortions in Germany were performed in hospitals. Despite the high number of women with a pregnancy interruption, very little is known about the abortion services supplied in hospital settings. Presumably, there are important abortion care variations among the German states.

Methods

A descriptive statistical analysis was carried out to identify regional differences of the health care provided in hospitals regarding the conduction of a voluntary abortion. Core data were abortion hospital-based care statistics from 2019 which were specifically prepared for the project “Medical Abortion Care at Hospitals (MedVersKH)” by the German Federal Statistical Office with the assistance of the University of Kassel. These hospital-based abortion statistics are analyzed and shown for the first time in the present study.

Results

Relevant abortion hospital-based care differences within Germany were identified, e. g. while in 2019 the national ratio, regarding the voluntary abortions conducted ambulatory in hospitals was 10,4 abortions per 10.000 women aged 15-49, the federal states ratios varied from 1,9 in Bavaria to 51,8 voluntary abortions carried out in non-stationary hospital settings in Brandenburg per 10.000 women aged 15-49. The largest of these abortion ratios were mainly reported by the northeast states of Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia, and Saxony in non-stationary hospital settings.

Conclusion

The statistics showed relevant differences between the German federal states in relation to the abortion health care which was provided in the hospital sector. The study leads to health system questions about the abortion care structure being heterogeneous in Germany and how to guarantee the regional need-orientation of abortion services and their accessibility. Additional health system analysis and further abortion care data are thus needed to properly deliver abortion care.

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Keywords

Abortion, health care, hospital services, regional disparities, unwanted pregnancy

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