

Background

Provide, Inc. is implementing a Referrals for Unintended Pregnancy Training curriculum in Southern and Midwestern states (including South Carolina) to **improve capacity of health and social service providers to offer options counseling and abortion referrals.**

The findings from these interviews with abortion patients and staff in South Carolina will inform a patient-centered evaluation of these trainings.

State-level restrictions increasingly imposed on abortion services in the U.S.¹, such as:

- Delayed access to care²
- Increased risk of being turned away due to gestational limits³
- Increased financial burdens on women⁴
- Overall negative impact on women's access to full range of reproductive health care⁵

Objectives

- To examine how women in South Carolina currently access abortion services
- To understand whether referrals and other measures could increase ease of access
- To make recommendations on patient-centered improvements for provider training
- To utilize findings in creating survey for use with abortion patients

Methods

Data Collection: 45 semi-structured private interviews with women receiving abortion services; ~10-30 minutes; \$40 gift card

Setting: 3 freestanding clinics in Charleston, Columbia, Greenville

Analysis: Thematic narrative analysis

Eligibility: 18+; English language
All eligible patients had opportunity to opt in/out

Emerging Themes from Qualitative Interviews with Abortion Patients

Knowing where to go for abortion services

- Internet search
- Previous experience
- Referral from friend or family member
- Referral from health professional

Professional Referrals—Neutral

"It was more or less, 'Good luck with your pregnancy, here's some information.' They didn't go into detail as far as what I was gonna pursue. It was cut and dry, basically."
31 year old, preg test at health department clinic

Professional Referrals—Positive

"Oh yeah, I told her [I wanted to have an abortion]. She said, okay, that's your decision. But if you change your mind, then **she told me everything.**"
23 year old, pregnancy test at health department clinic

"I went for my yearly check-up with my doctor, and that's how she let me know [I was pregnant]. I was unsure what I wanted to do, so she talked to me a little bit, and provided me with some options. It wasn't hard. I think she could tell from my reaction that I didn't know [what I wanted]."
29 year old, on unexpected positive pregnancy test with doctor

Professional Referrals—Negative

"After I said, 'Well maybe I don't want to keep it,' he walked out the room. And then he gave me a brochure that somebody had written on "Planned Parenthood" and then he just left. **I thought it was rude. You're a doctor, you're a professional.**"
18 year old, pregnancy test at Urgent Care clinic

"I didn't expect it was going to be easy but it was a little frustrating that **there were so many little passive kind of pushes away from it.**"
24 year old, pregnancy test and ultrasound at teaching hospital clinic

Examples of Barriers to care *Others include transportation, scheduling/timing* **Finances**

"The only thing that was rough on me was trying to find the money. I actually had to get a loan [of \$250]. And a very dear friend of mine sold some of his stuff to help me pay for half of it ."
31 year old describing biggest challenge

Crisis Pregnancy Centers

"Those driveways are so close together and they have the same name...I went up to the counter and I told her my name my appointment time, and I'm here for the abortion pill. And she was like, 'Ok, well can I get your name and your phone number and social security number?'"
33 year old on accidentally going to crisis pregnancy center next door to clinic

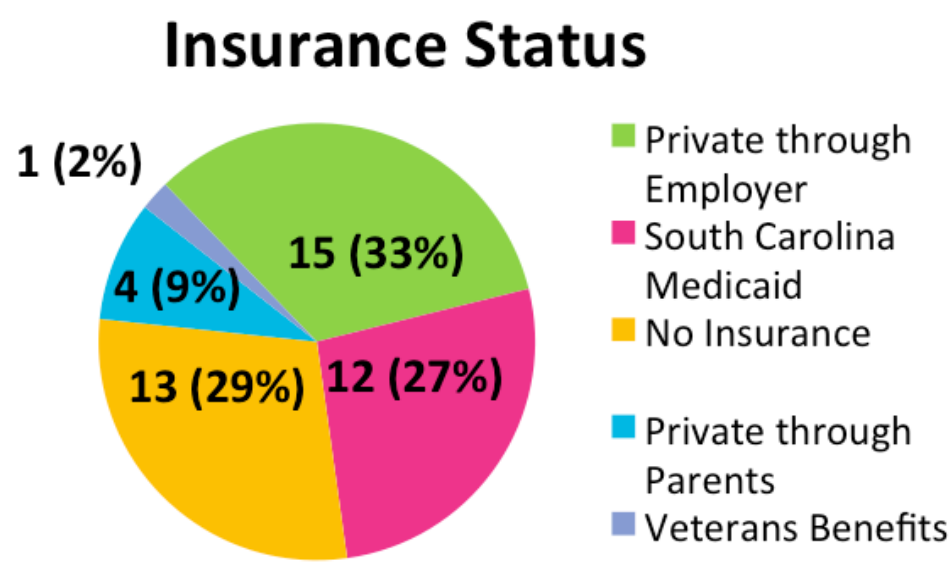
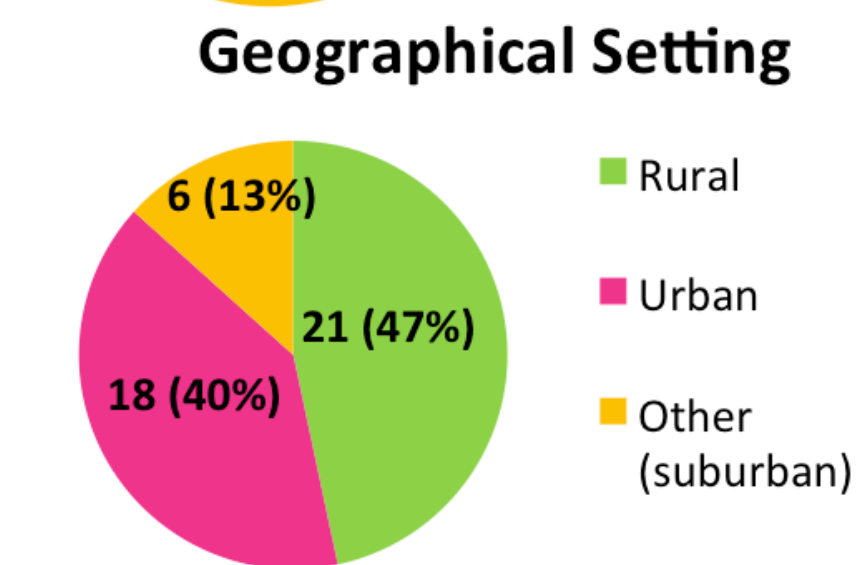
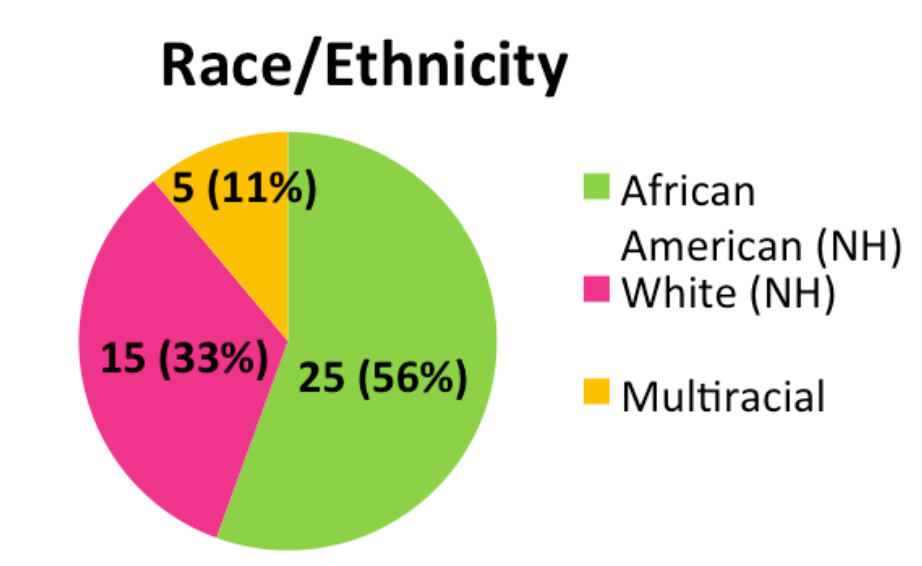
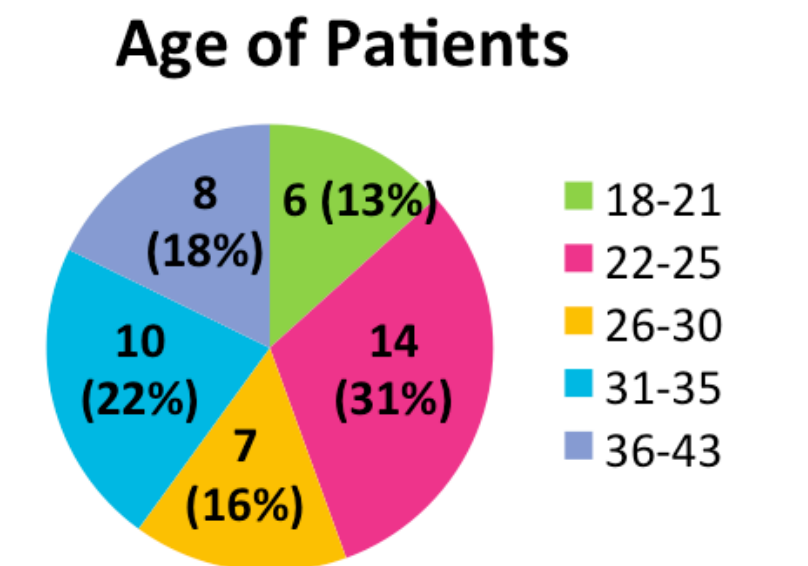
South Carolina



Greenville Clinic + CPC driveways



Sample Characteristics (n=45)



Next Steps

- Further analyses of qualitative data with patients & clinic staff
- Development of patient-centered recommendations for Provide, Inc. training; patient survey
- Development of white paper

References

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