



PRESS RELEASE/OpEd – TOMAGWA HealthCare Ministries  
September 12, 2016 8:30 a.m. CDT  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***Subject: TOMAGWA Cites Medical Best Practices as Affirmation of No BCP Policy***

*TOMBALL, TX* Recently, TOMAGWA’s application to participate in a funding initiative for healthcare offered by a long-time supporting foundation was declined due to our policy not to provide birth control pills or abortifacients, and because we do not provide access to what the foundation refers to as “the full suite of family planning options for women, which ensure that women have available to them a choice in their reproductive healthcare.” TOMAGWA’s management and governing board believe that TOMAGWA is a ministry first, and that we do ministry through practicing medicine and dentistry, and by caring for the whole person. We believe that the patient is best cared for when we follow best-practices and most especially when we work within the will of God for His people.

Regarding best-practices, our medical staff has determined that Oral Hormonal Contraceptives (birth control pills) provide risks to our patients that far outweigh the benefits except in relatively few cases where such hormonal treatments are medically necessary. For those exceptions, we refer to our collaborative partners who see those patients for that specific purpose while maintaining our existing nominal fee policy – in short, the patient remains a TOMAGWA patient long-term. For the majority of patients, however, we find hormonal contraceptives bring with them the following medical dangers:

- They increase medical costs to women because they require on-going medical monitoring to assess side effects including hypertension, irregular menses, headaches and hyperlipidemia
- They expose the woman’s body to hormones, increasing the risk of breast cancer

- They cause delay in first term pregnancy, which prevents the protective effect of full term pregnancy on the breast (pregnancy helps the immature breast tissue mature, decreasing the number of cancer prone immature cells)
- They are potentially an abortifacient
- They increase the risk of thrombosis including deep vein thrombosis and stroke
- Combined with smoking, they markedly increase the risk of stroke and other cardiovascular events
- They increase cardiovascular risks in obese women
- They change the cervical mucosa so that the risk of contracting STI's increases
- They put women at risk for infertility due to suppression of the ovarian/pituitary axis

We believe that birth control pills should only be distributed as a medically necessary exception and not the rule. For educational purposes, all of the available options are presented to each patient along with the recommendations of the physician as to which option is best for each patient's situation and condition. Reproductive healthcare is only a small part of the overall healthcare picture, and TOMAGWA provides a full spectrum of healthcare services for women including, but not limited to the following:

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| · Acute and chronic illness care            | · Well-woman examinations              |
| · Breast and cervical cancer screening      | · Cardiac evaluations/EKG              |
| · Comprehensive type II diabetes management | · Lab work, tests and x-rays           |
| · Respiratory therapy                       | · Vision and hearing screening         |
| · Smoking cessation                         | · Weight management                    |
| · Class D pharmacy services                 | · Counseling and depression management |



- Medication assistance and education
- Nutrition counseling
- Referrals to “in-service” medical specialist partners
- Dental services
- Dyslipidemia management
- Family planning counseling

TOMAGWA HealthCare Ministries has provided quality healthcare to our community for 27 years. We have always held the health and dignity of our patients and the hope of our Lord Jesus Christ as our primary mission and ministry to the people we serve. We have provided medical, dental, mental, emotional and spiritual care to thousands of low-income individuals and families over the years, and always with the support of the compassionate people in the community, private and corporate foundations, and always without government funding. Our faithful community of contributors has always helped their neighbors-in-need: men, women and children – and we are grateful for their support. While we fully support each of our donors in following their beliefs when making charitable contributions, our hope is that the overall health of our community will remain the focus and that the political debate about reproductive healthcare will not define or limit our patients’ healthcare.

TOMAGWA will continue to seek funding to replace that which was lost to ensure that the access to quality care for our neighbors-in-need remains at current levels. The prayers and support of our community are appreciated in this time, and we continue to look to God for the provision He has always given to this ministry. Those wishing to help us close this unexpected funding gap may contribute online at [www.tomagwa.org](http://www.tomagwa.org). All gifts, large and small, are a blessing. Questions may be directed to Lee Ann Kroon, Executive Director, [LeeAnnK@tomagwa.org](mailto:LeeAnnK@tomagwa.org) or Rev. Steven G. Lightfoot, Senior Director of Development, [StevenL@tomagwa.org](mailto:StevenL@tomagwa.org).

God’s Word provides us with clarity and guidance in this circumstance: 1 Corinthians 10 and 2 Corinthians 8 teach us that whatever we do, we should do it with excellence and for the glory of God. Luke 16 teaches us that we can either seek the favor of man or the favor of God. Seeking the favor of man is temporal. Seeking the favor of God has eternal impact. Matthew 6 teaches us that we cannot serve two masters. We choose to serve God and not mammon. Thank you for your faithful support. May God richly bless you.



By His Grace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lee Ann Kroon".

Lee Ann Kroon  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steven G. Lightfoot".

Rev. Steven G. Lightfoot  
Senior Director of Development

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