



Table de concertation des groupes de femmes  
de la Gaspésie et des Îles-de-la-Madeleine

# ACCESS TO THE ABORTION PILL IN GÎM

The situation in Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-  
Madeleine - September 2023

**WOMEN'S HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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# **Challenges and inequalities in access across the province of Quebec**

Since 2018, the abortion pill has been available and legal in Quebec. However, Radio-Canada revealed in fall 2019 that 23 of the 49 clinics offering abortions in Quebec still did not offer it. However, in July 2022, the Collège des Médecins du Québec lifted the restrictions limiting access to the abortion pill by removing the requirement for prescribing physicians to undergo training with an internship, as well as the obligation to perform a pelvic ultrasound. Training followed by an internship was a major obstacle for doctors, since training courses were usually held only in urban areas. We therefore believe that more doctors will eventually be able to prescribe it across the province by following the simplified training. The abortion pill makes it possible, up to the 9th week of pregnancy, to have an abortion at home and avoid surgery.

## **In Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine : access that remains fragile !**

As in the rest of Quebec, access to medical abortion remains uneven in the Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine region. In fact, women on the Gaspé Peninsula can expect to have access only in certain locations. In addition, some points of service are still in a precarious situation, relying heavily on the initiative of existing doctors.

Gaspé nurses are trained to assess patients and explain the options available for medical or surgical termination of pregnancy. However, the team at the Gaspé planning clinic, gynecologists in Chandler, Gaspé and the Magdalen Islands, and a doctor in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts are trained to prescribe it. The abortion pill has recently become available in Baie-des-Chaleurs. However, the sustainability of the service is not yet assured. With the lifting of mandatory internship training, other family doctors in the area may be able to complete the training, the process for which has been simplified. Women who wish to have a medical abortion should therefore be referred to the nurse specialized in STIs in their territory, or directly to the [Gaspé family planning clinic](#) (click on the link for contact details), which is the regional information center for users.

The Women's Health Advisory Committee is working on this issue on an ongoing basis, and will support initiatives that will enable the service to be rolled out more widely.