

Testimony
Health & Human Services Interim Committee Testimony
Representative Weisz, Chairman
October 7, 2010

Chairman Weisz and members of the Health & Human Services Interim Committee, I am Carol Cartledge, Director of Public Assistance of the Department of Human Services. I am here today to provide you with information requested on Alternatives to Abortion services.

Senate Bill 2391 requires the Department of Human Services to disburse TANF funds to nongovernmental entities that provide alternatives-to-abortion services and expend funds to inform the public about this service. The services must be outcome-based with positive outcome-based results.

Outcomes:

- 3,258 women have received services
- 8 reported abortion
- Media used to promote services includes brochures, posters, Facebook, radio advertisements, and college newspapers resulting in an increase use of services of 32%.

What we have learned:

- Data collection
 - Outcomes collected on client as long as client receives services; if clients discontinues to receive services, we do not know final outcome (birth vs. adoption vs. abortion)
 - Unable to compare usage of alternatives-to-abortion program with statewide abortion data or teen pregnancy data due minimal identifier of last four digits of social security number

- Identifiers (social security number, date of birth, or name) are not collected by Red River Women's Clinic in Fargo and therefore not reported to Vital Records, so we are unable to match alternatives-to-abortion clients with abortion clients
- Vital Records data on abortions does not include all North Dakotans
- Reporting is voluntary, so some clients chose not to provide SSN or DOB; makes it difficult to unduplicated counts

Services provided and average length of counseling services per client is as follows:

- Pregnancy counseling – 2.38 hours
- Pre-natal education – 1.18 hours
- Parenting education – 1 hour
- Pregnancy assessment/intake - 1 hour

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.