



Resolution 15: Requesting that the University Provide Funds for an MD Gynecologist at Cornell Health

Abstract: The student health service at Cornell’s Ithaca campus, Cornell Health, does not currently have an MD gynecologist on staff, which impedes many students from receiving necessary gynecological care. This resolution requests that the university provide funding for Cornell Health to employ an MD gynecologist who is able to diagnose and treat the most common gynecological issues in the student population, including chronic vulvovaginal conditions and pelvic pain conditions.

Sponsored by: Valeria Valencia '23, Morgan Baker '23, Amisha Chowdhury '23, David Nachman '25, Arielle Johnson PhD, Victor Wu '25

Reviewed by: Executive Committee, 11/16/2022 (5-0-1)

Type of Action: Recommendation

Originally Presented: 11/17/2022

Current Status: New Business

Whereas, the mission of Cornell Health is “to foster lifelong learning and well-being through innovative services and strategies that promote the physical, emotional, and social health of individuals and our diverse campus community” and

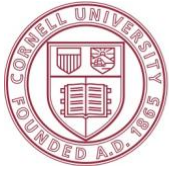
Whereas, pelvic pain conditions, including endometriosis, vulvodynia, and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), affect up to 16% of cisgender women of reproductive age^{1 2 3 4}, as well as many transgender and nonbinary people of reproductive age, and

¹ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/endometriosis>

² https://www.monash.edu/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1412644/PCOS_Evidence-Based-Guidelines_20181009.pdf

³ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14681994.2013.842969>

⁴ <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/roughly-one-quarter-us-women-affected-pelvic-floor-disorders>



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24 **Whereas**, untreated pelvic pain can cause short and long-term health consequences, including
25 psychological and physical distress, anxiety, depression, poorer quality of life, anemia and
26 infertility, as well as causing absenteeism and productivity declines⁵, and

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28 **Whereas**, we commend Cornell Health for providing quality gynecological treatment to many
29 students despite limited resources, while affirming that an MD gynecologist could provide
30 services that are currently unavailable, and

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32 **Whereas**, other peer institutions including Harvard and Yale have MD gynecologists available
33 through their student health services, and

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35 **Whereas**, Cornell students do not have access to convenient and accessible off-campus
36 gynecological care because the majority of MD gynecologists in the Ithaca area specialize in
37 childbirth services, which does not cover the full scope of gynecological care that Cornell
38 students need; this forces many students to travel to Rochester or New Haven to receive quality
39 care for common conditions, and

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41 **Whereas**, on December 2, 2021, 136 students published an editorial in the Cornell Daily Sun to
42 “urge Cornell to provide funding for Cornell Health to hire an MD gynecologist. Specifically, we
43 need a gynecologist with experience diagnosing and treating chronic vulvovaginal and pelvic
44 pain conditions such as vulvodynia, endometriosis, PCOS, and pelvic floor dysfunction”⁶, and

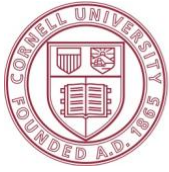
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46 **Whereas**, on June 24th, 2022 following the U.S. Supreme Court decision overturning Roe v.
47 Wade, Dean Augustine M.K. Choi sent an email to the entire Cornell community stating that
48 “Cornell clinicians, across all our campuses, will continue to provide quality health care services
49 to women, as is legal in the state of New York, and will continue to serve the health care needs
50 of all our patients, faculty, staff and students,” despite the fact that students needing
51 gynecological care do not have access to an MD gynecologist on Ithaca’s campus, and

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⁵ [https://www.fertstert.org/article/S0015-0282\(19\)32292-7/fulltext](https://www.fertstert.org/article/S0015-0282(19)32292-7/fulltext)

⁶ <https://cornellsun.com/2021/12/02/letter-to-the-editor-cornell-health-needs-a-gynecologist/>



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53 **Whereas**, considering that historically marginalized groups, including racial and ethnic minority
54 groups and LGBTQ+ persons, often have disproportionately low access to comprehensive
55 gynecological care, Cornell Health could reduce access disparities in the student population by
56 providing inclusive care from an MD gynecologist^{7 8 9 10}, and

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58 **Whereas**, we believe that providing quality gynecological care to students on the Ithaca campus
59 is an urgent issue, and such care could greatly improve the wellbeing of many students.

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61 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the University secure funding and develop a projected timeline for
62 hiring an MD gynecologist who can treat the most common gynecological issues faced by the
63 Cornell student population, and

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65 **Be it further resolved**, that the University provide regular updates on the hiring process to the
66 GPSA and SA, and

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68 **Be it finally resolved**, that the University adequately communicate all gynecological services,
69 including those provided by the MD gynecologist, that are available at Cornell Health to the
70 student body.

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72 **Respectfully Submitted,**

73 Valeria Valencia '23

74 *President, Student Assembly*

75 Morgan Baker '23

76 *Women's Issues Liaison At-Large, Student Assembly*

77 Amisha Chowdhury '23

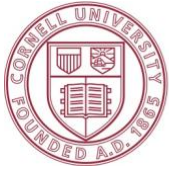
78 *Student Advocate, Student Assembly*

⁷ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26595584/>

⁸ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12712135>

⁹ <https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2012/05/health-care-for-lesbians-and-bisexual-women>

¹⁰ <https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/full/10.1089/trgh.2018.0022>



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- 79 David Nachman '25
- 80 *Students With Disabilities Representative At-Large, Student Assembly*
- 81 Victor Wu '25
- 82 *Member, Student Health Advisory Committee, Student Assembly*
- 83 Arielle Johnson PhD
- 84 Pelvic Pain Association at Cornell
- 85 Planned Parenthood Generation Action at Cornell
- 86 PERIOD@Cornell
- 87 The Advocacy Project from Cornell University
- 88 Law - Women of Color Collective
- 89 Cornell Law School - Women's Law Coalition
- 90 Disability+
- 91 Multicultural Academic Council
- 92 Cornell University Women's Health Initiative
- 93 Qgrads (LGBTQ+ Graduate Student Association)
- 94 Gender Justice Advocacy Coalition, Cornell University
- 95 Biodiversify Affiliates at Cornell
- 96 I-An "Amy" Su
- 97 *President, Cornell's Graduate & Professional Women's Network (GPWomeN)*