



1 Resolution 4: Requesting that the University Provide 2 Funds for an MD Gynecologist at Cornell Health

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

9 **Sponsored by:** Michelle Heeney, Life Sciences Voting Representative

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

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

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

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

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

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

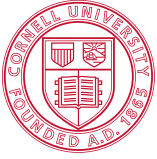
¹ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/endometriosis>

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>

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



Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

53 Respectfully Submitted,

54 Michelle Heeney

55 Life Sciences Voting Representative, GPSA

56 Arielle Johnson

57 Treasurer, Pelvic Pain Association at Cornell

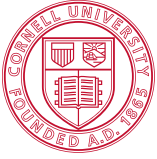
⁶ <https://cornellsun.com/2021/12/02/letter-to-the-editor-cornell-health-needs-a-gynecologist/>

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>



Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

- 58 Pelvic Pain Association at Cornell
- 59 Planned Parenthood Generation Action at Cornell
- 60 PERIOD@Cornell
- 61 The Advocacy Project from Cornell University
- 62 Law - Women of Color Collective
- 63 Cornell Law School - Women's Law Coalition
- 64 Disability+
- 65 Multicultural Academic Council
- 66 Cornell University Women's Health Initiative
- 67 Qgrads (LGBTQ+ Graduate Student Association)
- 68 Gender Justice Advocacy Coalition, Cornell University
- 69 Biodiversify Affiliates at Cornell
- 70 I-An "Amy" Su, President, Cornell's Graduate & Professional Women's Network (GPWomen)