Weekly News Review – 12 May 2017

A week of important numbers.

Guttmacher released an encapsulation of what US international family planning assistance does and how it could be damaged by the Trump administration’s proposals: “In FY 2017, $607.5 million made it possible to achieve 26 million women and couples receiving contraceptive services and supplies; 8 million unintended pregnancies, including 3 million unplanned births, averted; 3.3 million induced abortions averted (the majority of which are provided in unsafe conditions); and 15,000 maternal deaths averted… All the benefits detailed above would be erased if U.S. assistance for international family planning and reproductive health programs was eliminated. Moreover, each decrease of $10 million in U.S. funding would result in 433,000 fewer women and couples receiving contraceptive services and supplies; 128,000 more unintended pregnancies, including 57,000 more unplanned births; 55,000 more abortions (the majority of which are provided in unsafe conditions); and 250 more maternal deaths.”

Domestically, an NPR investigation shows the “U.S. Has The Worst Rate of Maternal Deaths in The Developed World” (MMR 26.4). Forbes cites 3 ways “Trumpcare” would end abortion.

A sobering report from the UNFPA that 300,000 women die during pregnancy globally. So many people are working hard around the world to reduce that number including these 4 women supported by USAID in Africa and Asia.

Social Good Moms notes 5 maternal health interventions that can save lives, while an article in the Huffington Post looks at 4 ways FP investments can reduce maternal deaths.

And the birth control pill was released 57 years ago and “never stopped being radical.”

The week following International Day of the Midwife is International Nursing Week, so many articles continued to look at their essential frontline importance, in Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia and Nigeria, as well as a brave Zambian woman who travelled to South Sudan to serve the refugee population there.

194 nations will attend the World Health Organization World Health Assembly will get under way May 22, where in addition to discussing the new Ebola threat in DRC, the most important decision may be the election of the new WHO Director-General. Global Health Now concluded its excellent series of articles about the three candidates: Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, David Nabarro and Sania Nishtar. UNAIDS had its particular questions for the candidates, while the White Ribbon Alliance is calling for the new D-G to promote “self-care” solutions and the Guardian asks for reform and courage.

U-M’s Michelle Moniz published research that shows “Access to Long-Lasting Contraception After Childbirth Lags Behind Demand” in the US, concluding “We need to remove the barriers that prevent women from getting their preferred method of contraception in a way that’s most convenient for them… Expanding access to reversible contraception after childbirth will have a far-reaching impact.”
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