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**Sam Rowlands**

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University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

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[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107647381](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107647381)

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First published 2014

Printed in the United Kingdom by Clays, St Ives plc

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

Abortion care (Rowlands)

Abortion care / edited by Sam Rowlands.

p. ; cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-64738-1 (paperback)

I. Rowlands, Sam, editor. II. Title. [DNLM: 1. Abortion, Induced. WA 550.1] RG734

363.46-dc23

2014022525

ISBN 978-1-107-64738-1 Paperback

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Every effort has been made in preparing this book to provide accurate and up-to-date information which is in accord with accepted standards and practice at the time of publication. Although case histories are drawn from actual cases, every effort has been made to disguise the identities of the individuals involved. Nevertheless, the authors, editors and publishers can make no warranties that the information contained herein is totally free from error, not least because clinical standards are constantly changing through research and regulation. The authors, editors and publishers therefore disclaim all liability for direct or consequential damages resulting from the use of material contained in this book. Readers are strongly advised to pay careful attention to information provided by the manufacturer of any drugs or equipment that they plan to use.

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## Preface

This book is designed to be a resource for all those providing abortion care around the world. It is acknowledged that the book has a degree of UK bias. Attempts have been made, however, to give the book an international flavour by inviting contributions from around the world. It is hoped that there will be substantial applicability of the content of all chapters to all readers.

The book can be read from cover to cover or dipped into. It is more than a medical textbook. It deals with human rights, law, ethics and social factors too. It puts abortion into a global context. Those trained in medicine or nursing may find some of the chapters outside their normal sphere of experience, but it is hoped that these will be rewarding, albeit a little more challenging to read. Sociological jargon was rejected by the editor in order to make the text more accessible to a medical readership.

The contributors have been selected because of their excellence and expertise. Each chapter is an authoritative review of the subject. There is considerable innovation. For instance the historical chapter cites online archives of medical journals going as far back as the 1830s. The subject of stigma is newly emerging with respect to abortion and shows how the social sciences can make an important contribution to our understanding. Some readers may view chapters by lawyers with some trepidation, but we should not underestimate how powerful combining forces with other disciplines can be when it comes to reducing the harm of unsafe abortion and improving services for women.

The editor provided a framework for the content of the book. The authors were given suggested topics but were free to develop these as they saw fit. The editor tried to hold back from suggesting too much in the way of alterations.

Although the conception and oversight of the book was down to the editor, many people have supported its coming to fruition. Tracey Masters highlighted the need for the book in the first place and read through the manuscript. Selected chapters were peer reviewed, in particular those with content beyond the editor's knowledge and experience. Thanks to David Horwell, Caroline Moreau, Omi Ohizua and John Spencer for this support. Scan images for the ultrasound chapter were kindly supplied by Trevor Wing.

Shelley Mehigan Raine read every word of the book and provided valuable advice. The publisher never flinched, despite anticipated hesitations on grounds of controversy and stigma. As always, though, the editor takes responsibility for the book in its final form.