

# **WHEN WOMEN TALK. MANIFESTO AGAINST OBSTETRIC VIOLENCE**

Obstetric Violence is defined as a specific form of violence exercised by health professionals (mainly medical and nursing staff) against women during pregnancy, labor and puerperium. It constitutes a violation of women's reproductive and sexual rights.

Obstetric Violence violates the human rights of women for the mere fact of being women -violencia machista-, against their dignity and integrity, with the aggravating factor of specific vulnerability which takes place due to circumstances surrounding reproduction.

So far, the United Nations' Committee for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) has issued two rulings with respect to Spain: first in 2020 and then in 2022. These rulings conclude that the women who have submitted their cases to the UN suffered obstetric violence. These cases were dismissed by the Spanish Courts. In contrast, the UN Committee, after analyzing the complaints, has assessed that these are cases of "obstetric violence" and adds that "the administrative and judicial authorities applied stereotyped and discriminatory notions to dismiss the claims" (arguing that it is the doctor who decides on a cesarean section or that the psychological injuries are a mere perception of the mother).

The response to both resolutions by the corresponding state and regional institutions is particularly worrying. Instead of following the instructions to carry out an analysis of the situation and invest in specific training for health and legal professionals, they have simply denied the facts. The associations signing this manifesto are aware of the impact and incidence of Obstetric Violence and also of the difficulties in achieving acknowledgment (a necessary requirement to address its causes and provide measures to correct them).

With this campaign, we intend to expose the experiences of Obstetric Violence in Spain as a violation of women's basic rights and, specially, of those persons who protect their sexual and reproductive health.

Therefore, we encourage you to share your experiences of Obstetric Violence by publishing them through social media with the hashtag #ThisIsViolence #ObstetricViolence. Likewise, we encourage you to send these detailed accounts to the Health Department of the corresponding Regional Government (Comunidad Autónoma), using the system of claims and complaints, as well as to the institution that acts as Ombudsman at regional level, in order for these experiences to reach Health Managers and all those responsible for the defense of our rights as users of the health system.

It is time that we put an end to this violence which, like gender/male violence, is structural and not isolated cases of malpractice, as some healthcare groups have tried to defend. Many of us, too many, have personally suffered obstetric violence. Therefore, we call on society as a whole to acknowledge, make visible, report and legislate together against this threat/injustice.



Uma manita





Besartean



Asociación Española de Psicología Perinatal



MAMETES I MÉS



Associació  
Catalana  
de Llevadores



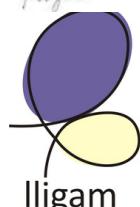
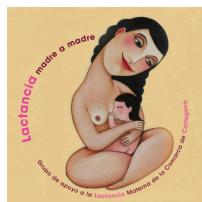
ANDALUCÍA LACTA

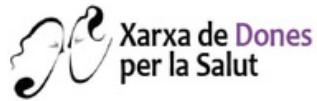


Asociación de  
Matronas de  
Madrid



vía  
láctea





Xarxa de Dones  
per la Salut



Asociacion  
de Mujeres  
de Armilla

"Las 13 Rosas"



- RED EL HUECO DE MI VIENTRE.
- COLECTIVOS DE MUJERES NIELDA
- ASOCIACIÓN DE MULLERES DE VILABOA
- HUELVA SORORA
- ASOCIACIÓN DE MUJERES CLARA CAMPOAMOR