An ethical issue related to nursing that shows increasing prevalence in our society is the increasing rates of induced abortions. This is a religious and political battle between “pro-life” and “pro-choice.” The religious side is in support of preserving the life growing in the womb and giving them a fair chance at life and the political side is in support of preserving a woman’s rights to making her own decisions regarding her body and reproductive freedom. The bioethical principles that are typically involved in abortion include autonomy, non-maleficence, and beneficence. Autonomy is considered in terms of the woman or mother having the right to make her own decisions regarding her body and terminating the pregnancy. Non-maleficence and beneficence are considered in terms of doing no harm to the fetus as well as the duty to benefit the patient. These principles can get muddy when some individuals believe that the fetus is a human and others don’t. In November of 2023, the state of Ohio voted on Issue 1, “The Right to Reproductive Freedom with Protections for Health and Safety.” This issue was passed meaning the majority of the population in Ohio was in support of amending the Ohio constitution so that making your own decisions regarding your own reproductive health it protected by the state constitution. In fewer words, our right to carryout an abortion before fetal viability has been preserved. However, in other states this is not the case. In some states, there are vast restrictions and some states won’t even perform an abortion at all. This poses an issue on society because some individuals will go through extreme measures to get an abortion, including illegal and unsafe methods.

The article I chose to review is “Ethical Care for Patients with Self-Managed Abortion after Roe.” The article states, “In June 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* that states may regulate the provision of abortion services, which could mean criminalizing abortion, including medication abortion. As a result, changing legal environments may create practice challenges for nurses caring for patients presenting with miscarriage or bleeding during early pregnancy. In areas where legal abortion is unavailable, people may seek abortion pills to end their pregnancies without clinician involvement, a practice called self-managed abortion” (Manns-James et al., 2023). The care that nurses provide to patients during pregnancy is drastically changing as the laws involving abortion change. The article is suggesting that nurses must now integrate interrogation into their care to uncover the truth behind any bleeding or miscarriage during pregnancy to unveil potentially incriminating information. While this is doing right by legal principles, it can also create distrust between the nurse and the patient when it’s a scenario involving rape, developmentally disabled individuals, incest, financially unstable individuals, etc. It may imply that the nurse isn’t taking into consideration the patient’s emotions or circumstances. It also poses the issue of caring for individuals who may have traveled to receive an illegal abortion that could’ve been performed incorrectly and the patient is now septic or even women who need an abortion to preserve their own life, but will not be performed in order to preserve the fetus’ life. How do you comfort a patient whose life is in danger because the law is denying them a controlled abortion? This very issue is challenges the ANA code of ethic for nurses: “The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.” In terms of this ANA code of ethic, we may be promoting the health of the fetus and providing them optimal care, but we’re not doing the same for the mother carrying the child whose life is on the line. Even so, you could

challenge that statement with the fact that we may not be promoting the health of the fetus if the mother's body is physically incapable of providing the required nutrients for the fetus to survive.

As the laws surrounding abortion continue to change, I am certain that we will see an increase in the correlation of illegal abortions and incarceration and with that, nursing care for these individuals will continue to change.

Manns-James, L., Pfeifer, K., & Gillmor-Kahn, M. (2023, January). *Ethical care for patients with self-managed abortion after... : Ajn the American Journal of Nursing*. LWW. https://journals.lww.com/ajnonline/fulltext/2023/01000/ethical_care_for_patients_with_self_managed.16.aspx