



## 2.10 PREGNANCY DIAGNOSIS AND COUNSELING

### POLICY:

A Title X project must offer pregnant clients the opportunity to be provided information and counseling regarding the following options: Prenatal care and delivery; Infant care, foster care, or adoption; and pregnancy termination. If requested to provide such information and counseling, provide neutral, factual information and nondirective counseling on each option, and referral upon request, except with respect to any option(s) about which the pregnant client indicates they do not wish to receive such information and counseling. (42 CFR § 59.5(a)(5), Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, Pub. L. No. 117-103, 136 Stat. 49, 444 (2022))

Projects should follow QFP, which describes how to provide pregnancy testing and counseling services and cites the clinical recommendations of the relevant professional medical associations.

### PROCEDURE:

Providers of family planning services should offer pregnancy testing and counseling services as part of core family planning services, in accordance with recommendations of major professional medical organizations, such as the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) (95–97).

Pregnancy testing is a common reason for a client to visit a provider of family planning services. The visit should include a discussion about her reproductive life plan and a medical history that includes asking about any coexisting conditions (e.g., chronic medical illnesses, physical disability, psychiatric illness) (95,96).

In most cases, a qualitative urine pregnancy test will be sufficient; however, in certain cases, the provider may consider performing a quantitative serum pregnancy test, if exact hCG levels would be helpful for diagnosis and management.

**Positive** Pregnancy Test discussion may include:

- Estimation of gestational age so that appropriate counseling can be provided
- If a woman is uncertain about the date of her last normal menstrual period, a pelvic examination might be needed to help assess gestational age
- Information about the normal signs and symptoms of early pregnancy, and should be instructed to report any concerns to a provider for further evaluation
- If ectopic pregnancy or other pregnancy abnormalities or problems are suspected, the provider should refer the client for immediate diagnosis and management
- For clients who are considering or choose to continue the pregnancy, initial prenatal counseling should be provided in accordance with the recommendations of professional medical associations, such as ACOG (97)
  - The client should be informed that some medications might be contraindicated in pregnancy, and any current medications taken during pregnancy need to be reviewed by a prenatal care provider
  - The client should be encouraged to take a daily prenatal vitamin that includes folic acid

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Last Reviewed: August 2025, August 2024, July 2023

Next Scheduled Review: August 2026



- Avoid smoking, alcohol, and other drugs
- Not to eat fish that might have high levels of mercury
- If there might be delays in obtaining prenatal care, the client should be provided or referred for any needed STI screening (including HIV) and vaccinations

**Negative** Pregnancy Test discussion may include:

- Women who are not pregnant and **who do not want to become pregnant** at this time should be offered contraceptive services
  - Explore why the client thought that she was pregnant and sought pregnancy testing services, and whether she has difficulties using her current method of contraception
  - Discuss the value of making a reproductive life plan
- Women who are not pregnant and **who are trying to become pregnant** should be offered services to help achieve pregnancy or basic infertility services. They also should be offered preconception health and STI services

Project staff should receive training on pregnancy counseling recommendations presented in QFP at least once during employment. See RHNTC web link below.

#### **RESOURCES:**

ND FPP Protocol GYN 10 Pregnancy Testing and Counseling

[Nondirective Counseling and Referral Job Aid](#)

[Exploring All Options: Pregnancy Counseling Without Bias Video](#)

[Pregnancy Testing and Counseling eLearning | Reproductive Health National Training Center \(rhntc.org\)](#)

Office of Civil Rights (OCR), [Conscience Protections for Health Care Providers | HHS.gov](#)

MMWR QFP [rr6304.pdf \(cdc.gov\)](#)

FPAR Forms and Instructions

[Family Planning Annual Report Forms and Instructions | HHS Office of Population Affairs](#)

[RHNTC: Client-Centered Pregnancy Test Counseling](#)