



Address Cardiac Conditions to Improve Maternal Health

Cardiovascular disease is a leading cause of maternal morbidity and mortality. This job aid presents high impact practices to address cardiac conditions in the outpatient sexual and reproductive health setting, along with resources to support implementation.

★ *Indicates a key practice*

Readiness

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE	RESOURCE
Train clinical staff to conduct key screening tests for monitoring cardiovascular health according to guidelines.	Heart-Health Screenings
Develop and maintain a standard policy and protocol to identify and respond to potential pregnancy-related cardiac conditions.	Cardiovascular Disease Assessment in Pregnant and Postpartum Women
Train clinical staff to identify and respond to potential pregnancy-related cardiac conditions.	The Intersection of Maternal Health and Cardiovascular Disease
Train health care team members on strategies to mitigate the impact of biases to enhance equitable care.	Cultural Competency and Humility in Family Planning Care: Embracing Culture eLearning Reducing the Impact of Unconscious Bias in Family Planning Care eLearning Understanding Bias Podcast
Establish or strengthen your system for timely and effective consultation and referral or transfer to the appropriate level of care.	Establishing and Providing Effective Referrals for Clients: A Toolkit for Family Planning Providers Title X Policy Templates (see p. 68: "Referral for Social and Medical Services #3: Coordination and Use of Referrals and Linkages")
Develop and maintain a set of referral resources, and foster communication with other health and social service providers to enhance support for clients with or at risk for cardiac conditions.	Local Resource List

Recognition and Prevention

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE	RESOURCE
Obtain the client's pregnancy and cardiac histories.	Providing Quality Family Planning Services: Recommendations of CDC and the US Office of Population Affairs

Recognition and Prevention Continued

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE	RESOURCE
<p>★ Assess and document if a client is pregnant or has been pregnant within the past year.</p> <p>Ask the screening question, "Are you pregnant, or have you been pregnant in the past 12 months?"</p>	<p>Recognize Postpartum Warning Signs Poster</p>
<p>★ Assess if warning signs of cardiac conditions are present, and respond according to protocols.</p>	<p>Recognizing Urgent Maternal Warning Signs in the Postpartum Period Webinar</p>
<p>★ Screen for structural and social drivers of health that might impact clinical recommendations or treatment plans. Link the client to resources that align with their health literacy, cultural needs, and language proficiency.</p>	<p>Addressing Social Determinants of Health in Family Planning Care Meeting Package</p> <p>The PRAPARE Screening Tool</p>

Response

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE	RESOURCE
<p>Offer reproductive life planning discussions and resources, including access to a full range of contraceptive options for which the client is medically eligible.</p>	<p>Determining Your Client's Need for Services and Discussing Reproductive Goals eLearning</p> <p>Client-Centered Reproductive Goals and Counseling Flow Chart</p> <p>Guide to Contraception Information for Women with Cardiovascular Disease</p> <p>Client-Centered Contraceptive Counseling Process Job Aid</p>
<p>★ Educate all clients who are pregnant, or who have been pregnant in the past year, on complications and early warning signs. Provide instructions of who to notify if they have concerns.</p>	<p>HEAR HER Urgent Maternal Warning Signs</p>

Reporting and Systems Learning

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE	RESOURCE
<p>Monitor outcomes and process data related to cardiac conditions. Disaggregate by race and ethnicity, given known disparities in rates of cardiac conditions experienced by Black and Indigenous pregnant and postpartum people.</p>	<p>High Impact Practice Set (HIPS) for Outpatient Settings: Address Cardiac Conditions to Improve Maternal Health Measurement Tool</p>

Respectful, Equitable, and Supportive Care

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE	RESOURCE
<p>Provide person-centered, trauma-informed communication and counseling to support the client in understanding recommendations and options.</p>	<p>OARS Model—Essential Communication Skills Job Aid</p>

These practices were adapted from [Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health \(AIM\) Patient Safety Bundles](#) by the RHNTC in collaboration with the [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists \(ACOG\)](#). [Cardiac Conditions in Obstetric Care. \(2022\)](#).

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