

Perinatal Substance Use

5 ways you can improve care during pregnancy and beyond

Pregnancy presents unique opportunities for patients to make positive changes in their substance use. When you become an informed provider, you empower patients to make those changes.



Educate Yourself

Learn more about the pharmacology of substance use. Promote evidence-based care by communicating with patients in a way that separates fact from fiction. Understand the cycles of sobriety and relapse so that you can help patients plan for their recovery. Advise on the risks associated with polysubstance use.



Use the Right Words

Know the difference between substance use, substance misuse, and Substance Use Disorder (SUD). Recognize that substance use carries a stigma, which is a barrier to seeking care. Reject language that shames.



Verbally Screen Every Patient

Talking about substance use should be a routine part of everyone's medical care. Get comfortable discussing it. Ask questions and listen to what your patients have to say. You may be the first person to ever ask.



Get Trained to Offer MAT

Medication-Assisted Treatment is the Standard of Care during pregnancy, but there are not enough providers. Contact the New York State Health Department at buprenorphine@health.ny.gov to become an MAT provider. Make naloxone available to all your patients who use opioids.



End the Stigma

Embrace people who use substances. Meet them where they are. Abide by your medical ethics. Practice beneficence. Promote public health.



Academy of Perinatal
Harm Reduction

www.perinatalharmreduction.org



National
Perinatal
Association
www.nationalperinatal.org



New York State
Perinatal Quality Collaborative
www.nyspqc.org