



# Strengthen Hypertension Services to Improve Maternal Health

Hypertension is a leading cause of maternal mortality and a contributor to racial disparities in maternal health outcomes. This job aid presents high impact practices to strengthen hypertension services in the outpatient sexual and reproductive health setting, along with resources to support implementation.

★ Indicates a key practice

## Readiness

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE	RESOURCE
Develop a protocol for implementation of hypertension prevention and control services in the family planning setting.	<a href="#">Sample Policy for Hypertension Prevention and Control Services Job Aid</a>
Establish a policy for timely and effective referral of clients with hypertension.	<a href="#">Establishing and Providing Effective Referrals for Clients: A Toolkit for Family Planning Providers</a>  <a href="#">Title X Policy Templates</a> (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 services and support for clients with or at risk for hypertension.	<a href="#">Local Resource List</a>
Train health care team members on strategies to mitigate the impact of biases to enhance equitable care.	<a href="#">Cultural Competency and Humility in Family Planning Care: Embracing Culture eLearning</a>  <a href="#">Reducing the Impact of Unconscious Bias in Family Planning Care eLearning</a>  <a href="#">Understanding Bias Podcast</a>

## Recognition and Prevention

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE	RESOURCE
★ Assess and document if a client is pregnant or has been pregnant within the past year.  Ask the screening question, "Are you pregnant, or have you been pregnant in the past 12 months?"	<a href="#">Recognize Postpartum Warning Signs Poster</a>
★ Ensure accurate measurement and assessment of blood pressure for all clients according to nationally recognized standards of care.	<a href="#">Accurate Measurement of Blood Pressure in a Reproductive Health Setting Video</a>  <a href="#">8 Steps to Accurately Measure Blood Pressure (BP) Poster</a>

## Recognition and Prevention Continued

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE	RESOURCE
<p>★ Screen for structural and social drivers of health that might impact clinical recommendations or treatment plans. Link clients to resources that align with their health literacy, cultural needs, and language proficiency.</p>	<p><a href="#">Addressing Social Determinants of Health in Family Planning Care Meeting Package</a></p>
<p>Train staff on foundational concepts, including screening for hypertension; how hypertension relates to general health and reproductive health; and racial disparities in health.</p>	<p><a href="#">Integrating Hypertension Prevention and Control into Family Planning Services eLearning</a></p>

## Response

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE	RESOURCE
<p>Utilize a standard policy and protocol for the diagnosis and management of hypertension in the family planning setting.</p>	<p><a href="#">How to Diagnose and Manage Hypertension in a Family Planning Setting Job Aid</a></p>
<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><a href="#">Determining Your Client's Need for Services and Discussing Reproductive Goals eLearning</a></p> <p><a href="#">Client-Centered Reproductive Goals and Counseling Flow Chart</a></p> <p><a href="#">Client-Centered Contraceptive Counseling Process Job Aid</a></p>

## Reporting and Systems Learning

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE	RESOURCE
<p>Monitor outcomes and process data related to blood pressure and hypertension. Disaggregate data by race and ethnicity, given known disparities in rates of hypertension.</p>	<p><a href="#">High Impact Practice Set (HIPS) for Outpatient Settings: Strengthen Hypertension Services to Improve Maternal Health Measurement Tool</a></p>

## Respectful, Equitable, and Supportive Care

HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE	RESOURCE
<p>Provide client-centered, trauma-informed communication and counseling to support the client in understanding recommendations and options.</p>	<p><a href="#">OARS Model—Essential Communication Skills Job Aid</a></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). [Severe Hypertension in Pregnancy. \(2022\).](#)

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