

Strategies for Ensuring Access to Emergency Contraception: A Checklist for Family Planning Staff



This checklist was created to support family planning staff in ensuring that all people have what they need to achieve full reproductive autonomy, including access to emergency contraception (EC). Strategies for ensuring access to EC—to prevent pregnancy following unprotected or inadequately protected sexual intercourse—focus on improving knowledge and skills among staff and clients, in conjunction with maintaining sound fiscal and operational processes. Using this checklist, family planning staff will be able to see where they have already incorporated strategies to ensure EC access, as well as consider additional strategies for improving this access.

Within the categories of: 1) training for family planning staff; 2) billing and coding training and tools; 3) organizational strategies; and 4) provision of EC, this checklist lists multiple strategies to consider for ensuring access to EC.

Here's how to use this checklist:

1. Assemble a team of two or more staff members of diverse roles and responsibilities.
2. Check each strategy that is already being implemented at your agency.
3. Reflect on your responses under each of the checklist's four categories.
4. Review the strategies that remain unchecked to identify potential areas of improvement.
5. Determine which strategy (or strategies) to prioritize for ensuring access to EC.
6. Revisit this checklist annually and aim to incorporate a new strategy each time.

Training for Family Planning Staff	<p>Train all staff on EC basics: What is EC? What are the different types of EC? How does EC prevent pregnancy? What are the disadvantages/side effects to EC? How effective is EC in preventing pregnancy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Contraception Facts for Family Planning Staff (RHNTC) • Emergency Contraceptive (EC) Methods Table (RHNTC) • Emergency Contraception Practice Bulletin (ACOG, Number 152, reaffirmed 2022) • DIALS Podcast Emergency Contraception with Dr. David Turok (NCTCFP, 2022) • Understanding the Mechanism of Action for Emergency Contraceptive Pills Instructional Video (NCTCFP) • Emergency Contraception Drop In Learning Session (NCTCFP)
	<p>Train all staff on the importance of same-visit EC provision as part of person-centered counseling training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Systems for Same-Visit Provision of All Contraceptive Methods (Best Practice 3) Training Guide (RHNTC) • Contraceptive Access Assessment (RHNTC)
	<p>Inform staff about EC misinformation campaigns and tactics and counsel clients using scientific facts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facts Are Important: Medication Abortion “Reversal” Is Not Supported by Science (ACOG, 2020)
	<p>Train all staff on the differences between EC and medication abortion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Contraception Fast Facts Job Aid (RHNTC) • Plan C: Copper IUD as Emergency Contraception (Cicatelli Associates, Inc.)
	<p>Provide clinicians with long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LARC Link (NCTCFP) • Address Common Concerns for Providing Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) to Adolescents Training Guide (RHNTC)

	<p>Implement federal, state, and local policies regarding expanding access to EC (i.e., standing orders for registered nurses to dispense EC and statewide pharmacy protocols that allow licensed pharmacists to dispense EC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn your state EC laws and policies (Guttmacher, 2022)
<p>Billing and Coding Trainings and Tools</p>	<p>Learn about different drug discount programs in order to obtain lower-cost EC supplies for Title X-qualifying clients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contraceptive Access Change Package: Utilize Diverse Payment Options to Reduce Cost as a Barrier for the Facility and the Patient (Best Practice 4) Training Guide (RHNTC)
	<p>Maximize reimbursement for EC services through Medicaid and third party payers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contraceptive Access Change Package: Utilize Diverse Payment Options to Reduce Cost as a Barrier for the Facility and the Patient (Best Practice 4) Training Guide (RHNTC)
	<p>Use appropriate coding for EC methods, including modifiers for reimbursement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Podcast 6 Transcript: Best Practices for IUD Coding and Reimbursement (NCTCFP)
	<p>Ensure all EC methods are included in clinic and payer formularies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contraceptive Access Change Package: Stock a Broad Range of Contraceptive Methods (Best Practice 1)
	<p>Track claims data to ensure appropriate reimbursement for EC services and same-visit provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contraceptive Access Change Package (RHTNC)
<p>Organizational Strategies</p>	<p>Collaborate with local pharmacies and pharmacists to reduce misinformation and improve timely access to care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Studies show over-the-counter oral EC is not consistently stocked on pharmacy shelves and is commonly kept behind the counter or in locked displays, creating unnecessary barriers. Misinformation regarding age and ID requirements among pharmacists, pharmacy staff, and customers is also being reported. Map and website detailing pharmacist prescribing of contraception, including EC, and related legislation (Power To Decide) Beyond The Beltway: Pharmacist Prescribing of Hormonal Contraceptives one-pager (Power To Decide)
	<p>Purchase EC via the 340B Drug Discount Program, through direct purchase or donation, purchasing in bulk to further reduce cost per pack, and collective bargaining with EC vendors for group pricing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every Body Texas, EC for Every Body, is a website specifically for Title X clients in Texas. However, the website is an effective guide for other grantees interested in sharing state-specific EC purchasing resources. The Plan B One-Step® Tablet Donation Program accepts donation requests via webform. For additional information, email planbdonations@zenogroup.com Direct Relief’s Safety Net Support (SNS) Program offers a wide range of donated contraceptive drugs and devices. Title X clinics may submit an application for the SNS Program via webform. For additional information, download the SNS Program fact sheet or email usaprograms@directrelief.org Your agency may qualify for group pricing through a program providing U.S. publicly funded family planning clinics’ access to prescription emergency contraceptive ulipristal acetate (UPA), commonly known as ella®. This program is available through a partnership between Medicines 360 and HRA Pharma. RHNTC Patient Experience Improvement Toolkit: Clinic Environment Assessment Sample Donation Solicitation and Thank You Letter
	<p>Ensure client education materials and reminders on EC are embedded in electronic health records (EHR) to prompt family planning providers and staff to address EC at every visit. Consider creating EHR quick charting templates to decrease the burden of documenting EC provision.</p>
	<p>Maintain flexibility in clinic schedules for same-visit services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same-Visit Contraception: A Toolkit for Family Planning Providers: Strategy 1: Stock the full range of methods, including at least one of each provider-dependent method (RHNTC) Consider creating walk-in appointments to allow for increased EC access

Provision of EC

Make universal EC counseling a routine clinical practice for all, including male, clients

- [Male Engagement Social Media Toolkit for Title X Family Planning Agencies](#) (RHNTC)

Provide a variety of EC method options following unprotected or inadequately protected sexual intercourse

- [Emergency Contraceptive \(EC\) Methods Table](#) (RHNTC)

Ensure sufficient stock of several different EC methods for on-demand provision and to ensure informed choice

- [Same-Visit Contraception: A Toolkit for Family Planning Providers: Best Practice 1: Stock a Broad Range of Contraceptive Methods & Same-Visit Contraception Implementation Checklist](#) (RHNTC)

Develop and establish clinic policy that includes advanced supply of EC and devices as a routine clinical practice

- [Emergency Contraception Practice Bulletin \(ACOG, Number 152, reaffirmed 2022\)](#)
- Access to Emergency Contraception Committee Opinion (ACOG, Number 707, July 2017)
- [Protocol Template: Emergency Contraception \(CTC-SRH, 1/4/2023\)](#)

Provide advanced prescriptions for oral EC (i.e., ella)

- [Emergency Contraception Practice Bulletin \(ACOG, Number 152, reaffirmed 2022\)](#)

Institute a same-visit strategy that includes same-day provider-dependent methods (IUDs, IUS, implant) without a clinic appointment

- [Same-Visit Contraception: A Toolkit for Family Planning Providers](#) (RHNTC)

Allow for telehealth appointments with direct medication mail services for provision of EC without an in-person clinic visit

- [Telehealth for Reproductive Health Care Resources](#) (Reproductive Health Access Project)

Prepare I&E Committee approved EC information to be distributed upon clients' requests

- [I&E Materials Review Toolkit](#) (RHNTC)

Provide referrals and warm transfers for clients who desire EC, but are unable to receive their method of choice at time of visit

- [Providing Effective Referrals Training Guide](#) (RHNTC)

Include information on how to access EC within the Title X network and outside traditional clinic settings (telehealth, online contraceptive platforms, and over the counter) in Community Participation, Education, and Project Promotion (CPEP) activities

- EC can be provided to non-Title X clients and/or without the use of the Title X sliding scale at community events, through the mail, or through partnerships with other community organizations.
- [Using Virtual and Remote Outreach to Meet CPEP Requirements Job Aid](#) (RHNTC)

Provide EC to non-Title X clients outside the clinic setting and/or without the use of the Title X sliding fee scale. Consider partnerships with schools or college campuses to improve access to EC.