

Clinicians for Choice Abstract

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Workshop Title

Caring for the Woman with an Unintended Pregnancy: Teaching What Nurse Practitioner Students Need to Know

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Abstract

Nearly half of all pregnancies in the United States are unintended¹. Approximately half of those pregnancies end in a live delivery or miscarriage. The other half end in abortion^{1,2}, making abortion one of the most common surgical procedures in the country³. Yet, in spite of the frequency with which women experience unintended pregnancies and abortions, many nurse practitioner (NP) programs don't adequately prepare their students to care for these women. A shortage of qualified faculty, lack of teaching materials, and political pressures have all been identified as barriers to including reproductive options education into the curricula of NP programs.

NPs are intimately involved in providing direct care to women in a wide variety of settings. Because so many women seek health services related to unintended pregnancy, future NPs need to learn about pregnancy options counseling, emergency contraception and abortion as a routine part of their education.

Workshop presenters will provide background epidemiologic data on unintended pregnancy and its consequences, as well as a theoretical framework for teaching about reproductive options that draws from literature on teaching about sensitive subjects. Participants will then be invited to engage in an interactive discussion about challenges encountered when teaching about reproductive options that will draw on both personal experiences and prepared case studies. Finally, presenters will share strategies and resources that can be used to effectively integrate this important women's health topic into extant curricula.

A good resource for training materials is the Reproductive Options Education Consortium for Nursing (the ROE Consortium), a pilot project that provides training, quality teaching materials, and support to nursing faculty across the United States. Visit <http://www.abortionaccess.org/viewpages.php?id=202>.

¹ Guttmacher Institute. Facts in Brief - Induced Abortion. 2006. http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb_induced_abortion.html

² Finer LB and Henshaw SK. Abortion incidence and services in the United States in 2000. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*. 2003; 35: 6-15.

³ Henshaw SK, Unintended pregnancy in the United States, *Family Planning Perspectives*, 1998, 30(1):24-29 & 46.