

Women's Wellness:

An Essential Component of Maternal and Infant Health

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Definition & Inclusion

- Has shifted overtime from a fairly narrow focus on pre-pregnancy health care to a very broad frame focusing on equity centered wellness with a focus on people of reproductive age.
 - A move from “reducing risks before pregnancy” to “people thriving and living into their full potential.”
- Reproductive Justice, Equity, and Life Course continue to be key frameworks.
- Tension between being fully expansive to include people without a uterus and the vast needs and diversity of people with uteruses who also bear the physical consequences of pregnancy.



Messaging is Key



ShowYourLove es una campaña a nivel nacional diseñada para promover el

 Thinking of getting pregnant?

 Food & Water Justice

Eating Well and Body Image

Messages that allow for nuance and attend to social determinants of health

Tested & Adapted into Spanish

New campaign logo & tagline - Centering people in their care



We MUST Work Upstream to Improve Maternal & Infant Morbidity & Mortality

- Perinatal Periods of Risk
- Fetal and Infant Mortality Reviews
- Maternal Mortality Reviews
- Hundreds of research studies (over 30 a month)
- Preconception Health and Care: A Life Course Approach (Shawe, Steegers, Verbiest, Springer 2020)

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AND – A lot of the work is the same...

- Access to Respectful Health Care – Being Believed and Heard
- Access to Behavioral Health Care (anxiety / depression / disordered eating / trauma)
- Social Determinants of Health (employment / education, safe housing, places to exercise, healthy food and water, environmental pollution)
- Relationship Care (interpersonal violence / self advocacy skills)
- Substance Use Services (tobacco / alcohol / cannabis too)
- Access to reproductive health services – contraceptives, fertility treatment, abortion
- Addressing structural and historic racism and bias



Truly – We Need a Life Course Approach

- Menstrual care and well-being / healthy puberty (adolescence)
- Fertility / Support around pregnancy considerations / preconception
- Pregnancy care
- Postpartum recovery
- Perimenopause support and care
- Menopause care

Anticipatory guidance is lacking. Research is lacking. Care transitions and coordination are lacking – across the life course.

How might we consider the arc of the experience of having a uterus, hormones, and all the social constructs that come with that?



National Survey Preliminary Findings

- 56% of people surveyed had 1 or more chronic conditions.
 - The majority did not receive any counseling about their reproductive health
- 79% thought it was important to talk with a provider about reproductive goals. 11% felt this was important only if planning a pregnancy. Only 7.8% didn't think this mattered.
- 1:4 women did NOT know that health prior to pregnancy was important.



National Survey Preliminary Findings 2

- People want health education directly from their health care provider during a visit. They want information / answer to questions via follow up contact/texts with their provider. How-to videos came in 3rd.
- People want more information about these topics as a priority:
 - How to cope with stress, depression, anxiety
 - Family history / genetic risks
 - Dealing with weight and feelings about weight
 - Easy tips for exercise and movement
 - Birth control / contraception
 - Cannabis use/benefits and concerns



Key Learnings - HRSA CoIN Project

Partnering with clinics is worth the investment. Building public health / academic / clinic / community partnerships is important. It takes time, patience, and willingness to be adaptive to each clinic and community context. Relationships matter and don't happen overnight.

Preventive care is important but not a priority in a clinic when there are other stressors (staff turnover, electronic health record changes, COVID-19, etc.). This doesn't mean people don't care. Plan for that!

Clinics that partner with community groups like Healthy Start **have a major advantage** in providing comprehensive wellness care.

It is important for organizations and projects to constantly **learn about how white supremacy and "whiteness" functions and be prepared to challenge** that and be open to change.





Future Forward:

National Convening on equity-centered wellness



BeforeAndBeyond.org/FutureForward

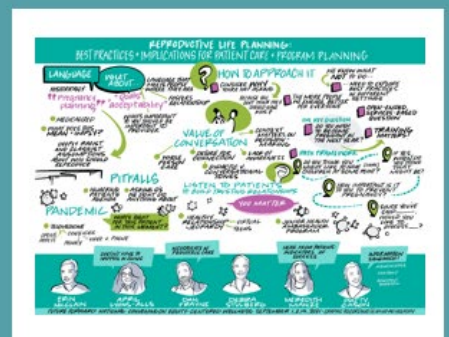
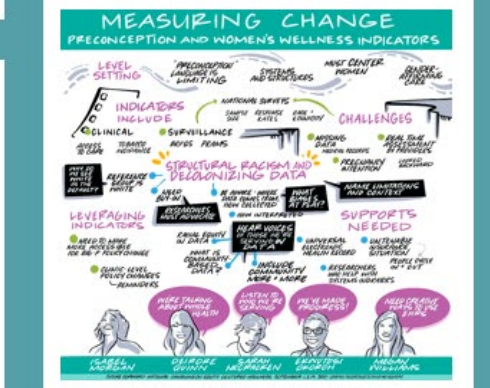
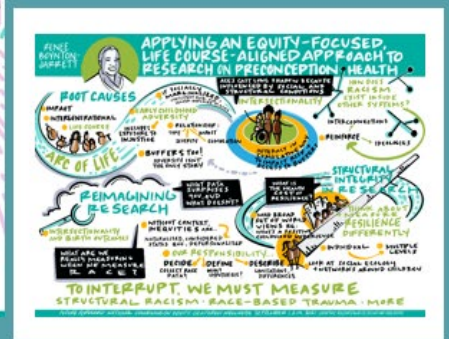
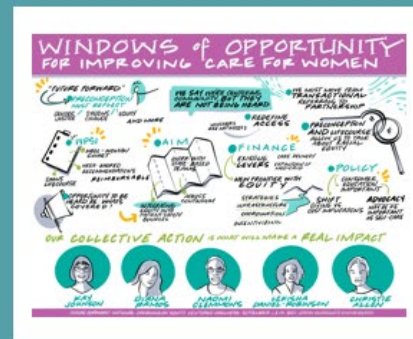
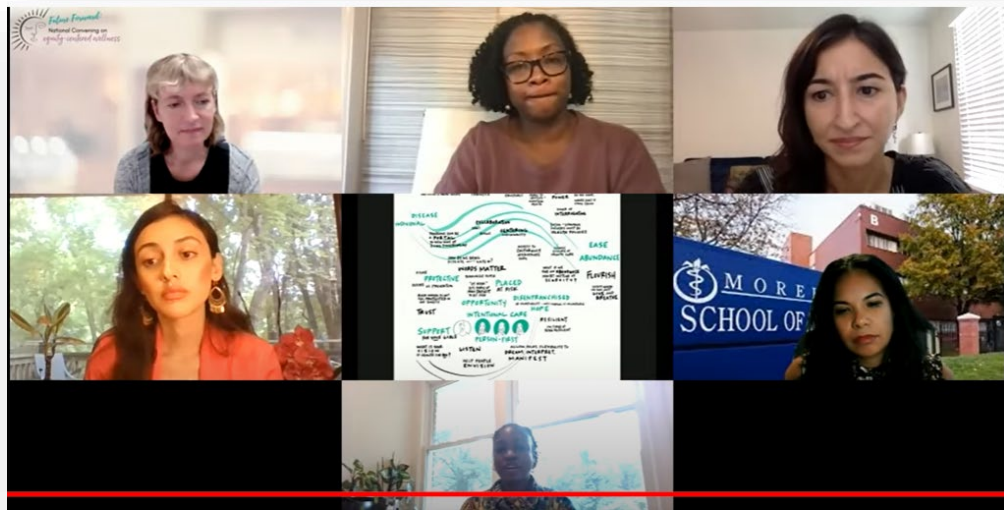


#ShowYourLoveToday

The purpose of the three-day virtual convening was to:

1. Build energy around women's health and wellness.
2. Create conversations that challenge our approach to health and care.
3. Share information and learning.
4. Chart the course forward in preconception health.

Future Forward session recordings, graphic images, and program details are live.



Supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number UF3MC31239-Providing Support For The Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network (CoIIN) To Reduce Infant Mortality.

beforeandbeyond.org/futureforward > Session Graphics

>> beforeandbeyond.org/futureforward/future-forward-sessions

EQUITY-CENTERED WELLNESS: SHIFTING CARE AND CULTURE FOR CHANGE

Co-creation Matters:

The answers already exist. We need to hear them and work together to make them happen.

Shift power. Identify ways to connect systems and people. Create new partnerships. Connect communities to resources.

Health Education Matters:

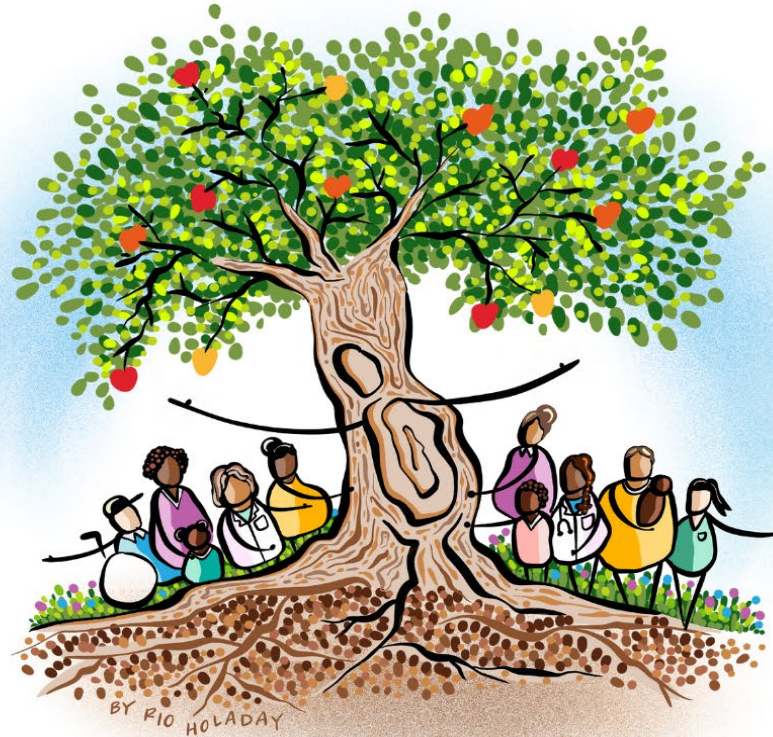
People need information about how their bodies work.

People need knowledge about reproduction, mental health, hormones – what makes them tick. People need actionable strategies that can work in their context and culture.

Coordinated, Quality, Clinical Care Matters:

Change systems and policies to support person-centered, respectful care.

Everyone should have access to what they need to feel good in their bodies. Respectful care. Equitable, unbiased, anti-racist, trauma-informed care. Whole-person care!



Listening Matters:

Centering people's experiences and needs is essential.

Build connection. People are experts in their own body. What is needed? What happened? Name strengths and wishes. Ask the community. Be humble. Listening busts myths.

Words Matter:

What we say and how we say it matters.

Use words like protective care, intentional care, hope, abundance, enable, sovereignty, you matter. Create space for folks to dream and manifest. Language justice. Be gender affirming.

Data Matters:

Equity in how data is collected, shared, owned, and used

Communities need data. Measure structural racism and race-based trauma. Share data in context. Data origins. Measure what matters. Bust biases. Advocate.



[HTTPS://BEFOREANDBEYOND.ORG/FUTUREFORWARD/](https://beforeandbeyond.org/futureforward/)

GRAPHIC BY RIO HOLADAY

Reproductive Wellness

for Women of
Childbearing Age with
Chronic Conditions



YOUR JOURNEY



Findings

- **Need for Self-Reliance** - Women felt that they have to be in charge of their own information, advocate for themselves, and do their own research.
- **Not Feeling Seen or Heard** - Women don't believe they are getting the care that they need. They don't feel that they trust the health care system and sometimes have fear, guilt, and shame about asking questions or advocating for themselves.
- **Negative Mental Effects** - Women's stressful experiences -- having chronic conditions, experiencing discrimination in health care, and having to be in charge of their own care -- takes a toll on mental health. Women need care that provides mental and emotional support.

Findings 2

- **Racism and Provider Bias** - Some women felt that their health care providers don't want them to have babies and push birth control because of their race/ethnicity. Women shared that they had experienced discrimination in the care they received based on their age, weight, and race/ethnicity.
- **Delays in condition identification and treatment are common.** Women feel and are sick. They experience infertility, miscarriage, infant anomalies, infant stillbirth and death. This care is reproductive justice!
- **Care is Caring** - Women want their providers to listen, be responsive, and provide holistic health care. They want to know the truth and want it delivered with hope.

Strategies for Change

- Comprehensive Care Clinics
- Care Coordination / Care “Quarterbacks”
- Insurance coverage for needed tests and treatments
- Improved educational materials for patients
- Improved training for clinicians to increase capacity to build trust.
- Training and scripts to improve clinician ability to talk about infertility, miscarriage and infant loss in the context of chronic conditions.
- All clinicians should know that conversations around reproductive goals – whatever they may be – is part of essential care – not extra



BUILD THE EVIDENCE BASE

- LISTEN
- SEX/GENDER BASED DATA
- RESEARCH

EVIDENCE TO PRACTICE

- PRE/ INTERPROFESSIONAL TRAINING & COLLABORATION
- PATIENT-CENTERED MEASURES & STANDARDS

BRAIDED FUNDING

- INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION
- COMMUNITY RESPONSIVE PRIORITIES

IMPLEMENTATION OF COORDINATED CARE MODELS

- REIMBURSEMENT
- POLICY
- RETURN ON INVESTMENT
- ACCOUNTABILITY

COMMUNICATION & TRUST

- NEW MINDSETS
- RELATIONAL CARE
- REDESIGNED CARE SPACES
- BI-DIRECTIONAL EDUCATION

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

— DISMANTLING RACISM, ABLEISM, MISOGYNY, FATPHOBIA, HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA —

Systems Mapping Conversations

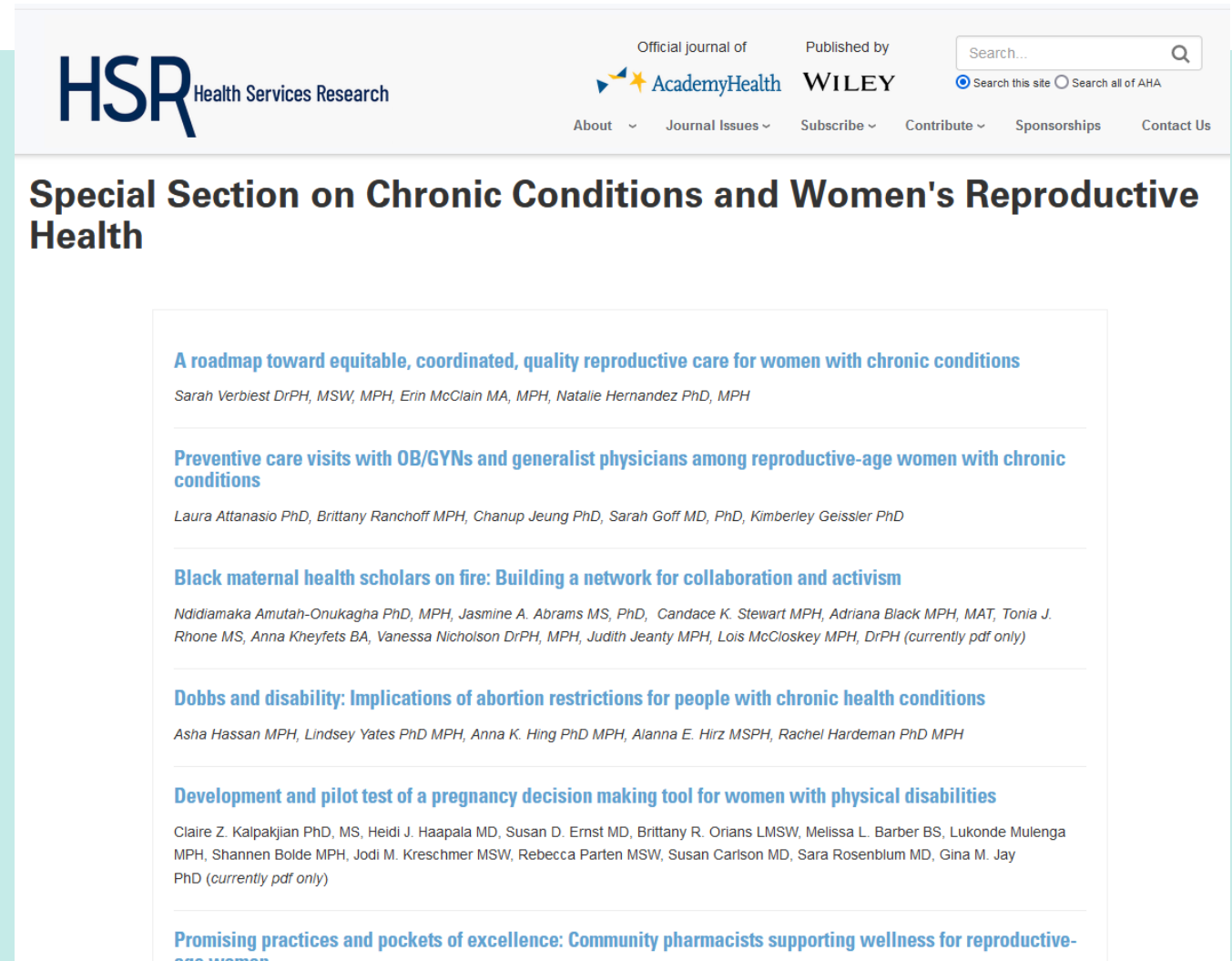
- Increase research funding for diseases/conditions that affect women (people with uteruses).
- Sex and gender disaggregated data collected across all data systems.
- Break down the siloed programmatic and research funding structures and mandates – especially at the federal level.
- Women’s health care and care around reproductive health must be made part of basic training and board standards for all clinicians, especially internal medicine.
- Providers, policy folks, and payors agree that there is a need to continue to explore innovative models of providing care and reimbursement for care.
- Need for incentives to support systematic reproductive intention screening.





Health Services Research – Special Section

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<https://www.hsr.org/special-section-chronic-conditions-and-womens-reproductive-health-supported-wk-kellogg-foundation>



HSR Health Services Research

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Special Section on Chronic Conditions and Women's Reproductive Health

A roadmap toward equitable, coordinated, quality reproductive care for women with chronic conditions
Sarah Verbiest DrPH, MSW, MPH, Erin McClain MA, MPH, Natalie Hernandez PhD, MPH

Preventive care visits with OB/GYNs and generalist physicians among reproductive-age women with chronic conditions
Laura Attanasio PhD, Brittany Ranchoff MPH, Chanup Jeung PhD, Sarah Goff MD, PhD, Kimberley Geissler PhD

Black maternal health scholars on fire: Building a network for collaboration and activism
Ndidiamaka Amutah-Onukagha PhD, MPH, Jasmine A. Abrams MS, PhD, Candace K. Stewart MPH, Adriana Black MPH, MAT, Tonia J. Rhone MS, Anna Kheyfets BA, Vanessa Nicholson DrPH, MPH, Judith Jeanty MPH, Lois McCloskey MPH, DrPH (currently pdf only)

Dobbs and disability: Implications of abortion restrictions for people with chronic health conditions
Asha Hassan MPH, Lindsey Yates PhD MPH, Anna K. Hing PhD MPH, Alanna E. Hirz MSPH, Rachel Hardeman PhD MPH

Development and pilot test of a pregnancy decision making tool for women with physical disabilities
Claire Z. Kalpakjian PhD, MS, Heidi J. Haapala MD, Susan D. Ernst MD, Brittany R. Orians LMSW, Melissa L. Barber BS, Lukonde Mulenga MPH, Shannen Bolde MPH, Jodi M. Kreschmer MSW, Rebecca Parten MSW, Susan Carlson MD, Sara Rosenblum MD, Gina M. Jay PhD (currently pdf only)

Promising practices and pockets of excellence: Community pharmacists supporting wellness for reproductive-age women



What other special groups should be prioritized?

- What does data tell us about other populations that need particular focus and attention?
- For example
 - Young adults with involvement in the carceral system / foster care / dealing with substance use
 - Young adults living in high stress / low opportunity neighborhoods
 - Young adults with disabilities
 - Youth transitioning from pediatric to adult care
 - People as they "fall off" parents' insurance
 - And?



Preconception Health Looking Forward



Strategies

- Support Access to Quality, Preventive Care and Mental Health Services Across the Life Course
- Provide Messages and Education in a Culturally Responsive Way that Models 'You Matter'
- Create Opportunities to Talk about a Person's Interest in Becoming a Parent (no matter who they are!)
- Provide Respectful, Trauma-Informed, Hopeful Care
- And YES – Inclusion MATTERS!



Federal Initiatives Underway to Advance Women's Health

- Women's Preventive Services Initiative
- Title V National Performance Measure #1 (this is changing)
- Federal Healthy Start Programs (Focus has varied over time)
- OPA – Title X Clinic Preconception Care Guidelines – **More Could Be Done Here!**
- NIH Research Conferences in 2021 – just announced new funding!
- Affordable Care Act / Medicaid Expansion (e.g. coverage on parent insurance until 26, preventive visit coverage)



Questions

IS there a national will to support equitable wellness for people who are not pregnant?



How might we expand the large investment in maternal health to move beyond pregnancy?



How might we do more to track national trends in women's health and well-being?



How do we manage challenges to women's autonomy in decision-making about their body?

Discussion

- Programmatic and intervention research funding is needed – what is written into grant opportunities matters.
- What about a training and TA center for women's preventive care and services?
- Lots to be done to improve access to primary care prevent visits (see below)
- Contact: Sarah_Verbiest@med.unc.edu



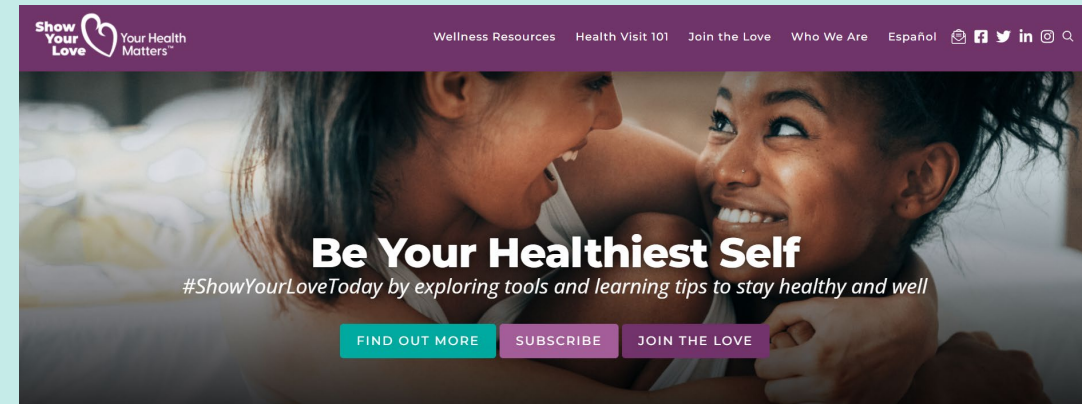
Resources for Consumers

Information about healthy lifestyles

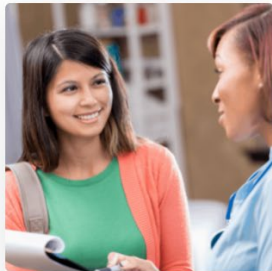
Information about Annual Check Ups

Connection with Others

[ShowYourLoveToday.com](https://www.showyourlovetoday.com) in Eng/Sp



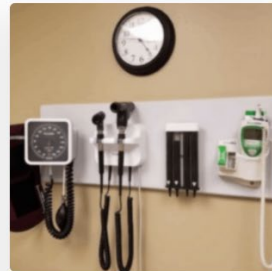
Show Your Love is a national campaign designed to promote wellbeing and support young adults as they



Annual Visits are Important



Getting the Most Out of Your Visit

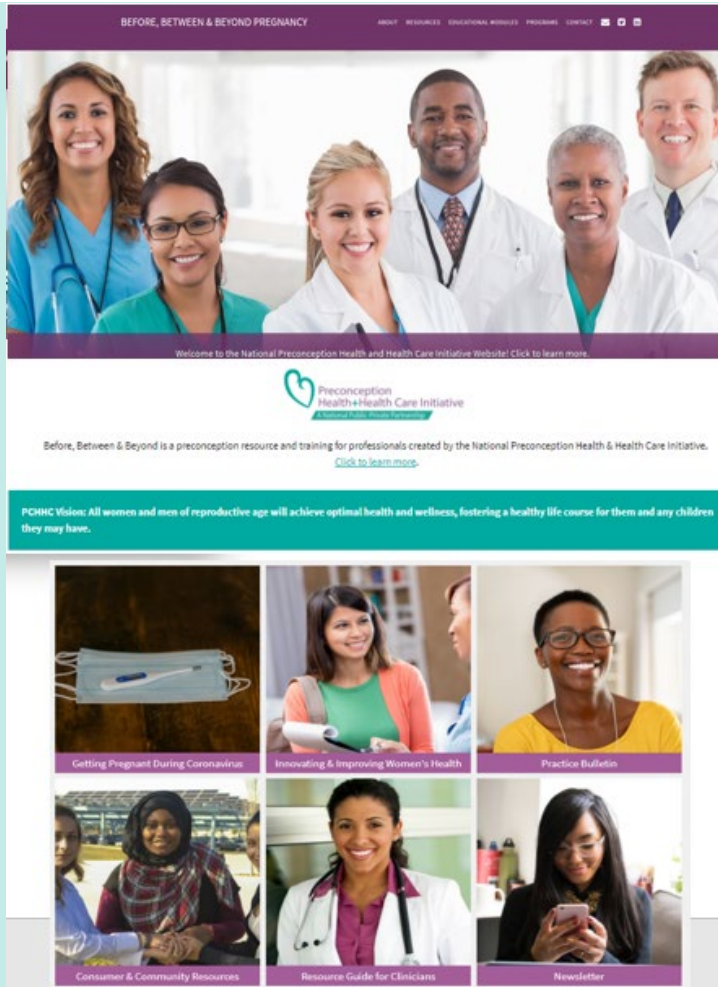


Post-Visit and Knowing Your Stats



Navigating Insurance

Resources for Health Care & Public Health Professionals



- Women's Health Practice Bulletin
- NEW Updated Training Modules
- Policy Information
- Webinars
- Screening Tools
- And more at

www.BeforeandBeyond.org