

INTRO: The lack of training opportunities is the most common reason that clinicians give for not providing or assisting with abortion procedures. Abortion care training is limited for most primary care clinicians and competency-based abortion care education standards have not developed to the same extent as other sexual and reproductive health education and clinical training.

As part of the California Health Workforce Pilot Project Study (California HWPP-171, 2008-2013), a standardized, competency-based curriculum and training plan was evaluated for education and training of primary care clinicians in early abortion care. Generalist physicians (MD/DO), nurse practitioners (NP), nurse-midwives (CNM) and physician assistants (PA)) were included.

The final version of the Early Abortion Training curriculum guidelines, core competencies and training plan integrates the HWPP-171 Training Program findings with the newly revised TEACH (Training in Early Abortion for Comprehensive Healthcare) Program Workbook (2016).

Who are these Early Abortion Training Guidelines for?

- Primary Care Provider (PCP) trainees in NP, CNM, PA and MD/DO academic training and residencies
- Post-graduate CE programs for PCPs
- California NP/CNM/PAs seeking education/training in early abortion care to comply with state law (AB 154) and Board of Nursing regulations: "[What CA NP/CNM/PAs need to know/do to provide Abortion Care in CA?](#)"

Overview: Early Abortion Education and Training Guidelines

These guidelines meet the abortion training requirements for California NPs, CNMs and PAs seeking to provide abortion care under [AB 154 statute](#)¹ and 2016 Board of Registered Nursing (BRN) abortion [training regulations](#)².

Teaching-Learning Objectives

The global learning objectives/outcomes are considered essential for primary care clinicians who care for women at risk for unintended pregnancy. They are focused on knowledge attainment, clinical competency, and professional skill development related to early abortion by medication and procedures (up to 14 weeks) by manual and electric vacuum aspiration. Prerequisite knowledge and skills include competency in pregnancy diagnostics (including ultrasonography), gestational age assessment, contraception (especially LARC methods), and medication abortion provision.

Expected Learner Outcomes:

- Develop a non-judgmental approach towards unplanned pregnancy and abortion care.
- Provide evidence-based care for women requesting advice about unintended pregnancy and all pregnancy options (prenatal care, abortion, adoption), including psychosocial, sexual health, and contraceptive needs.

¹ [California Assembly Bill No. 154 CHAPTER 662](#) An act to amend Section 2253 of, and to add Sections 2725.4 and 3502.4 to, the Business and Professions Code, and to amend Section 123468 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to healing arts. [Approved by Governor October 9, 2013. Filed with Secretary of State October 9, 2013]

² The BRN adopted regulations specifying the type of abortion procedure training required for NPs/CNMs (March 2016). These regulations are found in Sections 1463.5 (aspiration abortion by CNMs) and 1485.5 (aspiration abortion by NPs) of Division 14 of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations. Final regulatory language available at <http://www.rn.ca.gov/pdfs/regulations/order14635.pdf>

- Develop an appreciation of the reasons that women have unintended pregnancies and request abortion, with special attention to issues of culture, domestic violence, drug/alcohol abuse, and repeat terminations.
- Have in depth knowledge of early abortion interventions—medication and aspiration abortion procedures.
- Demonstrate clinical competencies, professional skills and complete log book related to:
 - Unplanned Pregnancy care
 - General abortion skills including pre-assessment and post-procedure care
 - Medication abortion provision
 - Early abortion (up to 14 weeks) provision by manual and/or electric vacuum aspiration procedure

Training/Teaching Objectives

Under the Early Abortion Curriculum and Training Plan, each trainee will complete the requirements of a competency-based curriculum in early abortion care (by medication or procedure) which includes readings, case-based exercises and supervised clinical training in the following core content:

- Values clarification and professional responsibilities
- Relevant statutes, regulations and professional practice guidelines/regulations
- Unintended pregnancy options counseling and abortion counseling
- Pre-abortion assessment and health/medical evaluation
- Medication abortion provision and care
- Uterine aspiration procedures for pregnancy termination, pregnancy loss, or miscarriage management by manual and electric vacuum aspiration (MVA/EVA)
- Pain management and procedural sedation
- Adverse event prevention and management
- Post-abortion care including pregnancy prevention methods/prescription
- Primary care practice integration (becoming a provider, office practice integration)

Training Plan: Didactic Curriculum & Clinical Training

The Early Abortion [Training Plan](#) with [training options](#) is based on the TEACH model and further tested in the California Health Workforce Pilot Program (HWPP) study. Available at <http://www.teachtraining.org/Workbook>

- Abortion care knowledge is attained through a didactic curriculum, case-based exercises, teaching points, and supplemental activities.
- The [didactic curriculum](#) includes (1) the TEACH interactive curriculum for training new reproductive health providers to competence along with the TEACH *Early Abortion Training Workbook* (ed. Goodman; TEACH 2016), available for free download at <http://www.teachtraining.org/training-tools/early-abortion-training-workbook/>, and (2) the book, *Management of Unintended and Abnormal Pregnancy* (eds. Paul, Lichtenberg, Borgatta, Grimes, Stubblefield and Creinin; Wiley-Blackwell 2009), available for purchase as hardcopy or e-book at <http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-1405176962.html>
- To achieve clinical competency, learners work one-on-one with an experienced abortion provider (trainer) and staff to practice counseling, ultrasonography, pre-procedure assessment, first trimester vacuum aspiration, and abortion aftercare.

- Clinical training varies depending on the clinical setting (e.g., professional training programs, higher volume clinics, or individual practice settings).
- Length of training depends on whether the learner will be complete all or [partial curriculum](#) and training plan. See TEACH Training Plan for description of [essential and optional activities including advanced training activities](#).

Evaluation Methods & Tools

Evaluation is competency-based rather than based on a specific number of completed procedures or clinic sessions. Based on the learner’s past experience and pre-training skill, 4-8 day long sessions may be adequate to achieve competency and 1-4 sessions may provide adequate exposure for partial training (e.g., not learning uterine aspiration).

Trainee Evaluation:

- [Skills Inventory](#): this inventory is a baseline self-assessment for providers tracking how much training and experience they have completed prior to abortion care training. This can be used as a benchmark document, as well as a final review.
- [Procedure Log](#): completed by the trainee and signed off by their supervisor; a procedure log is essential for all training cases. Trainees are expected to have procedure logs with them at all times while training with notes that include supervised/independent procedures and incidents (adverse events, morbidity, or near misses).
- [Daily Evaluation Card](#): a brief daily evaluation for trainers to complete on each training day. This is a very brief summary of how the trainee is progressing and areas that need attention.
- Evaluation of abortion knowledge attainment: by written completion of case-based exercises (end of each chapter in TEACH Workbook) or by written examination.³
- [Observed Performance Assessment](#): trainer/evaluator assesses the trainee’s post-training performance in in six areas of abortion care provision: patient care, communication and interpersonal skills, professionalism, systems-based practice, practice-based learning and improvement, and clinical knowledge.
- [Core Competencies for Early Abortion Care](#): trainee final assessment. These competencies were developed and tested as part of the California Health Workforce Pilot Project Program (HWPP-171) and describe the entry-level competencies for primary care clinicians providing early abortion care, regardless of setting. Intended to supplement the primary-care clinician competencies (e.g. CNM, DO, MD, NP, PA) as well as population-focused competencies (e.g. women’s health care, family practice), these core competencies are the essential knowledge, behaviors, and skills that primary care clinicians will demonstrate before independent practice in abortion care. The core competencies serve as the primary evaluation metric for abortion provision skill achievement rather than procedural numbers.

Training Program Evaluation:

- [Training Program Evaluation](#): completed by the trainee as an evaluation of the training process and program. Developed for residency programs in academic setting.

³ Created for the HWPP-171 Program with multiple-choice questions drawn from the 2012 edition of the TEACH Workbook chapters, the 60-question exam tests trainee knowledge of abortion care. This knowledge test requires updating to include new knowledge [See knowledge exam template with answer key, 2007]

- [Clinician Feedback Form for Clinic Staff](#): completed by the trainee, this form allows feedback to the trainers and clinic staff they have been working with. Created for a structured training program, and can be altered for different settings.
- [Clinic Services Satisfaction Survey](#): Patients are requested to complete a variety of scaled questions rating their experience with their abortion provider (trainee), and allows space for suggestions. This can be useful when building a training program and hearing from the patient side so that trainees are providing patient-centered-care.

Faculty Guidelines:

Guidelines and competencies for [Abortion Trainers](#) is included the TEACH Workbook ([Chapter 10](#)). Criteria for Abortion Trainers includes competency achievement combined with a documented safety record.

Training Resources/Tools

- [Simulation Training](#): workshops available on the TEACH training website for aspiration and complication simulations.
- [Trainee Agreement and Consent](#): a consent form for trainees to sign agreeing to adhere to the training experience. Specific for the TEACH program but can be used for other training programs.
- [Office Practice Tools](#): this is a list of resources that can be used for office integration. There is a wide range of information that can help any new provider consider adding abortion services to her/his practice. It should also be noted that the newly revised TEACH workbook has a chapter dedicated to [Office Practice Integration](#), which has similar information with more explanation.

Professional Resources for California Health Professionals

- Additional [professional resources](#) for California providers including [California statutes and regulations](#) can be found in the [Abortion in California: A Medical-Legal Handbook](#) (Jennifer Dunn et al) or on the [California Abortion Law website](#).
- For [California NP/CNM/PAs seeking to provide abortion care](#) and/or seeking education/training in early abortion care, see link to California specific education-training requirements [statutory requirements (AB 154), Physician Assistant Board requirements (for PAs), and California Board of Registered Nurses (BRN) regulations for NP/CNM training requirements).