



Assessing Women’s Social Needs: Screening for Social Determinants of Health

“Pregnancy may be an opportunity for women, their partners and other people living in their household to change their patterns of alcohol and other substance use. Health workers providing care for women with substance use disorders during pregnancy need to understand the complexity of the woman’s social, mental and physical problems in order to provide appropriate advice and support throughout pregnancy and the postpartum period.”

(World Health Organization, 2014)

The World Health Organization recommends that all pregnant women with opioid use disorders receive a full assessment for psychosocial needs which may create barriers to care. Ideally, this should be performed by a clinical social worker or other care management specialist. However, many practices do not have access to case management or other support services. A validated screening instrument for social determinants of health can be administered by any member of the care team, and is recommended in this context to help identify patient needs.

A statement by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, calling for integrating screening for social determinants of health in routine women’s health care, can be accessed at:

<https://www.acog.org/Clinical-Guidance-and-Publications/Committee-Opinions/Committee-on-Health-Care-for-Underserved-Women/Importance-of-Social-Determinants-of-Health-and-Cultural-Awareness-in-the-Delivery-of-Reproductive>

One such tool is [PRAPARE](#), developed and owned by the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) in partnership with the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organization (AAPCHO), the Oregon Primary Care Association (OPCA), and the Institute for Alternative Futures (IAF). PRAPARE can be downloaded and used without charge from:

http://nachc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/PRAPARE_One_Pager_Sept_2016.pdf

Additional background on the [development and validation](#) of PRAPARE, as well as information on incorporating the tool in a variety of electronic health records systems is available from:

<http://nachc.org/research-and-data/prapare/> (PRAPARE is protected by copyright)

The American Academy of Pediatrics' Screening Technical Assistance and Resource (STAR) Center offers a full toolkit for screening for Social Determinants of Health. These resources are available without charge from:

<https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/Screening/Pages/Screening-Tools.aspx>