

## Contraceptive Counseling

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content:	Testing and Quality Assurance Protocol

### Overview

This outline provides a detailed overview of the testing and quality assurance protocol for contraceptive counseling implemented by the Contraceptive CHOICE Project. The purpose of this protocol is to ensure that the GATHER process is implemented correctly and that trainees are proficient in contraceptive knowledge and information delivery. It is meant to be used by a trainer after completing the entire [Contraceptive Counseling Skills Training Outline](#) with trainees. Ensure that trainees have an understanding of the testing protocol after completing the training session. In CHOICE, trainees had approximately 10 days after training to study and practice counseling techniques; this protocol can be modified to meet your time and staffing constraints.

#### I. Testing Overview

- a. After completing the contraceptive counseling training, each trainee should pass 3 tests:
  - i. Contraceptive Knowledge
  - ii. Contraceptive Counseling Script
  - iii. Implementing the GATHER process
- b. The trainee should pass the counseling script test before scheduling the GATHER process test
- c. In addition to passing the 3 tests, the trainee must:
  - i. Observe counseling sessions (*refer to section XII of the [Contraceptive Counseling Training Outline](#)*)
  - ii. Provide counseling under trainer supervision
  - iii. Demonstrate maintenance of counseling skills through quarterly observation

#### II. Test 1: Contraceptive Knowledge

**Time: 15 Minutes**

- a. Format: 11 question oral exam (*refer to [Test 1\\_Oral Examination Questions](#)*)
- b. Explain to the trainees that they will meet one on one with a clinician to answer contraceptive knowledge questions. This could include information related to method effectiveness, contraindications or perfect vs. typical use. Trainees should specifically look at the [Contraception 101](#) presentation to study for this test. Selected Contraceptive Technology chapters may also be useful; refer to Section VIII of the [Contraceptive Counseling Skills Training Outline](#) for more information.
- c. During the test, the clinician will read each question and wait for the trainee's response
- d. The clinician can clarify questions and ask additional questions to help the staff person or trainee demonstrate their knowledge
- e. It is up to the clinician's discretion to decide if a trainee passes this test. If the staff member or trainee does not pass, the clinician informs them of their areas of weakness and encourages them to do additional studying and retest at a later date. At CHOICE, trainees retested within two weeks of the original test date, dependent upon the trainee and clinician's schedule availability.

- f. It is better to have a trainee answer with “I don’t know” than to make up an answer  
Providing a patient with biased or misinformation is unacceptable.

**III. Test 2: Contraceptive Counseling Script**

**Time: 30 Minutes**

- a. Format: oral presentation of counseling script
- b. Explain to trainees that they will demonstrate their ability to implement the script as she would with a patient. The eventual goal is to present the script from memory; however, it is acceptable for the trainee to have notes during testing.
- c. You (and/or additional trainers) will observe the trainee implementing the script and evaluate her on the following criteria:
  - i. Describes every method according to the script
  - ii. Uses models and other visual aids (such as the [What Method is Right for You?](#) handout) to help describe methods
  - iii. Lets the patient know she has options and the choice belongs to her
  - iv. Asks the patient to confirm her decision
- d. Providing constructive feedback
  - i. After the trainee finishes the script, you (and/or additional trainers) will ask the trainee to evaluate her own performance using the following questions as a guide:
    - 1. How do you think you did?
    - 2. What areas did you do well?
    - 3. What areas need improvement?
    - 4. What would you do differently next time?
  - ii. After the self evaluation, you will provide verbal feedback on the script delivery (*Refer to [Steps to an Effective Feedback Session](#)*)
- e. The trainee passes this test if she presents the script as written with minimal help from you during the session. If the trainee does not pass, you should inform her of the areas that need improvement, encourage her to practice the script further, and designate a time to retest. At CHOICE, trainees retested within two weeks of the original test date. For continuity purposes and to enhance retention of information, it would be helpful to schedule retest as close to the original test out as possible.

**IV. Test 3: Implementing the GATHER Process**

**Time: 60 minutes**

- a. Format: oral presentation of GATHER process
- b. Explain to trainees that they will demonstrate their ability to implement the counseling process from start to finish as they would with a patient. This includes the 20 criteria of the [Counseling Observation Form](#).
- c. You (and/or additional trainers) will observe the trainee implementing the GATHER process using the [Counseling Observation Form](#) as a guide. (*To see an example, refer to [Counseling Observation Form Sample](#)*). You may provide medical information from a [Patient Scenario](#), or make up your own scenario.
  - i. Place a check in the completed column if the step is performed adequately during the counseling session.
  - ii. In the notes section, highlight those items the staff person did particularly well and those items that need improvement.

- d. Providing constructive feedback
  - i. After the trainee finishes the session, you (and/or additional trainers) will ask the trainee to evaluate her own performance using the following questions as a guide:
    1. How do you think you did?
    2. What areas did you do well?
    3. What areas need improvement?
    4. What would you do differently next time?
  - ii. After the self evaluation, you will provide verbal feedback on the counseling session. (*Refer to [Steps to an Effective Feedback Session](#)*)
  - iii. Within 1 week, you should provide the trainee with a copy of the completed Counseling Observation form with your comments
- e. The trainee passes the GATHER process test if she successfully completes all 20 criteria on the observation form. If the trainee does not pass, the facilitator informs her of the areas that need improvement, encourages her to practice the GATHER process further, and retest at a designated time. At CHOICE, trainees retested within two weeks of the original test date. For continuity purposes and to enhance retention of information, it would be helpful to schedule retest as close to the original test out as possible.

V. **Supervised Counseling**

- a. Prior to counseling patients independently, you (and/or additional trainers) should supervise the trainee for 3 counseling sessions.
- b. You will observe the trainee implementing the GATHER process using the [Counseling Observation Form](#) as a guide.
- c. You should provide feedback after each session. If the trainee successfully completes all 20 criteria on the observation form, she is ready to provide counseling independently.
- d. It may be necessary to extend the number of supervised counseling sessions if the counselor or trainee does not successfully complete all 20 criteria on the counseling observation form.

VI. **Quarterly Observation**

- a. Quarterly observation ensures that all contraceptive counselors are implementing the GATHER process correctly and maintaining optimal counseling skills.
- b. You (and/or another trainer) should observe each counselor with a patient once every three months.
- c. During these observations, you should repeat the testing procedure for *Implementing the Gather Process* (Test 3) and provide constructive feedback.