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### Enhancing Rural Capacity for Contraceptive Provision Through Training

Center for Applied Research and Evaluation in Women's Health, East Tennessee State University

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# ENHANCING RURAL CAPACITY FOR CONTRACEPTIVE PROVISION THROUGH TRAINING



EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Center for Applied Research and Evaluation in Women's Health

## INTRODUCTION

The degree to which people may freely access and choose from among various contraceptive method options contributes to reproductive autonomy. Among clinics that do not receive the federal Title X Family Planning Program, training contributes to the availability of contraceptive services. Choose Well is a statewide contraceptive access initiative, launched in South Carolina in 2017 and continued through 2022. Choose Well was the first multi-sectoral statewide contraceptive access initiative of its kind in a predominantly rural Southeastern state. One core component of Choose Well included providing training opportunities for participating clinics.

## STUDY AIM

The purpose of this study was to explore training among Choose Well-participating federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) in rural areas prior to and during Choose Well and the perceived impact of training.

## METHODS

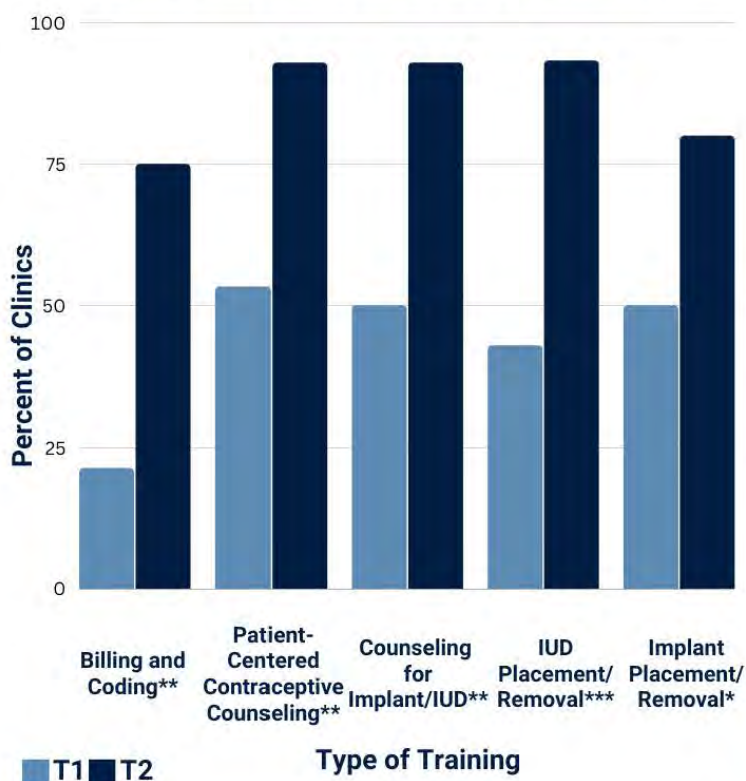
This study applied a mixed-methods approach. A statewide survey of clinic administrators was conducted in 2017 and 2020. This study focused on Choose Well-participating FQHCs in rural areas (2017 N=15 and 2020 N=15). Differences in trainings received were assessed between timepoints using a generalized binomial regression model with robust standard errors to account for repeated measurement.

Key informant interviews were conducted each year of the initiative. Respondents were recruited from lists provided by Choose Well. The sample frame includes respondents from rural FQHC clinics and systems and focuses on three consecutive years of interview data (2017-2019) (N=11). A two-phase coding process was applied.

## RESULTS

Overall, there was an increase in nearly all training types between 2017 and 2020. Notably, patient-centered contraceptive counseling training significantly increased between time points, from 53.5% to 92.9% of responding clinics ( $p=0.002$ ).

**Figure 1: Training among Rural Choose Well-Participating FQHC Clinics Before and During the Initiative**



### Improved capacity for enhanced contraceptive counseling

*"It was able to teach us more about how to do patient-centered counseling and offer them the best counseling of our abilities and our knowledge." [Year 2]*

### Expanded perspective on reproductive health

*"I think it just really helped with that frame of mind with staff when they have patients who are in the age range talk about the pregnancy intention and the contraceptive options." [Year 3]*

## DISCUSSION

This study indicates that Choose Well-participating FQHC clinics in rural jurisdictions increased training opportunities for contraceptive service provision throughout the first three years of the initiative. Interview respondents perceived a largely positive impact of training. Findings suggest that Choose Well trainings were widely implemented across rural environments, thus improving capacity for contraceptive service provision in rural communities in South Carolina. Through offering contraceptive care trainings, it is possible to enhance the opportunity for reproductive autonomy in a predominantly rural state in the Southeast.