



PREGNANCY CARE ALLIANCE  
OF MASSACHUSETTS

## RESPONSE to Consumer Advisory: Crisis Pregnancy Centers March 2023

***Claim: CPSs may appear to be reproductive health care clinics, but do not provide abortion care or abortion referrals, contraception or other reproductive health care, despite what they may advertise.***

Pregnancy centers truthfully and honestly advertise the services they provide for women that may include:

- Lab-quality pregnancy testing.
- Ultrasound exams.
- STI testing and treatment.
- Consultation with a licensed medical professional or licensed counselor.
- Information on all pregnancy options.
- Referrals for housing assistance, health insurance, food assistance and WIC.
- Material resources for families including clothing, diapers, layette items, formula and gift cards.

While pregnancy centers do not provide abortion services, it is important to note that many abortion clinics do not provide comprehensive health care since they do not offer prenatal care or any of the practical support services that many women facing an unplanned pregnancy may need.

***Claim: Most CPCs are NOT licensed medical facilities and do not employ healthcare professionals. Ultrasounds are not provided by licensed personnel which may result in inaccurate or misleading results.***

Centers offering medical services operate under the authority of a Massachusetts licensed physician. Ultrasound is a medical diagnostic test that requires certification and proficiency and is therefore conducted by trained, licensed medical professionals. Centers providing ultrasound exams are staffed by licensed Registered Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, or Registered Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (RDMS) who have been trained and certified in obstetrical ultrasounds.

***Claim: CPCs often mislead women about how far along they are into their pregnancy.***

There are a variety of tools available to calculate how far along a woman is in her pregnancy. Since pregnancy is dated from the first day of a woman's last menstrual period (LMP), an estimated gestational age can be arrived at using that calculation. However, a much more accurate dating of pregnancy is obtained through ultrasound. By not providing an ultrasound for a woman seeking abortion services, her safety is at risk if the dating of her pregnancy is calculated by LMP alone.

***Claim: CPCs do not keep medical records confidential.***

Centers adhere to HIPAA regulations and only disclose client information as required by law or when necessary to protect the client or others from imminent harm.

***Claim: CPCs often try to delay scheduling appointments to push people beyond the point at which they can obtain an abortion.***

Most centers are able to schedule a woman within days of her appointment request. Often a woman can be seen the same day that she contacts a center. Because most women facing an unplanned pregnancy are anxious to know if they are actually pregnant, a timely appointment is crucial or she will seek services elsewhere.

Since abortion is legal in Massachusetts up to 24 weeks, there is no advantage to not scheduling a woman within days of her request.

***Claim: CPCs often provide inaccurate and misleading information about abortion and the mental health effects of abortion.***

Information disseminated at pregnancy centers on abortion is medically accurate and has been reviewed and approved by teams of doctors, nurse practitioners, and registered nurses. All medical procedures come with an element of risk. During an appointment at a pregnancy center, a woman who has tested positive for pregnancy is educated on the types of abortion and the potential risks associated with surgical and chemical abortion. Although the standard of medical care for medical procedures and surgeries is to schedule a preoperative visit during which the procedure and risks are explained to a patient, abortion providers routinely fail to offer this same level of care to patients seeking abortion. By not giving a patient an opportunity to review procedures and risks prior to electing abortion jeopardizes a woman's health and safety.

***Claim: CPCs use tactics to try to pressure women into continuing pregnancy, for example, by providing baby clothes or a plastic fetus.***

Pregnancy centers offer practical help and support to women who may be in vulnerable situations, equipping them with the resources they need to successfully parent. Centers annually distribute thousands of dollars in free clothing, food, formula, baby items, gift cards, and other material resources.