

To Be or Not To Be...Pregnant

Presenters:

Deborah Allen, ScD
Director, Boston Public Health Commission
dallen@bphc.orgwood

Michele Stranger Hunter
Director, Oregon Foundation for Reproductive Health
michele@prochoiceoregon.org

Susan Wood, PhD
George Washington University Milken
sfwood@gwu.edu

Highlights

- It is increasingly clear that reproductive health care for women prior to pregnancy is important for healthy births and for long term health of women and children.
 - It is not news that mistimed and unwanted pregnancies are linked to adverse outcomes.
 - More recent evidence points to the birth outcome impact of unaddressed health needs of women prior to pregnancy, even when pregnancy is intended and desired.
- Prevalence of both unplanned pregnancy and pregnancy as the entry point into health care reflect bifurcation of health care for women of childbearing age and gaps in access to both well-woman and reproductive care for many women.
- One Key Question links well-woman care to reproductive health via universal screening for pregnancy intent. It promotes appropriate, individualized, nonjudgmental contraceptive and/or preconceptional care.
- One Key Question requires changes in clinical practice, but even more fundamentally, changes in the culture of women's health care.

- One Key Question also implies changes in community norms, to assure that women recognize the need to engage in care prior to pregnancy whether they wish to become pregnant, wish to avoid pregnancy or are ambivalent.
- One Key Question offers a strategy for achieving Healthy Start goals and benchmarks related to the breadth and quality of women's health care and thus, to move the needle on birth outcomes.