Welcome to Gladney Center for Adoption’s Nurse Training Program

“The Professional Nurse’s Role in the Adoption Process”
Nursing contact hours have been applied for through the Texas Nurses Association, an accredited approver of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation.
The purpose of this educational activity is to educate Registered Nurses on the option of adoption including the process of adoption and their role in working with patients making an adoption plan or facing an unplanned pregnancy. The goal is to inform Registered Nurses and medical professionals of the rights, roles and responsibilities regarding the welfare of their patients and the ethical guidelines in which to follow regarding an adoption plan. Finally, the Registered Nurse who attends this educational activity will be better equipped to talk to and care for a patient making an adoption plan or facing an unplanned pregnancy.
Objectives

- Describe the adoption process
- Discuss how to address barriers to adoption
- Discuss the legal issues and ethical considerations surrounding adoption
Definition of Adoption

Adoption is a legal process in which all parental rights and responsibilities are transferred from one set of parents to an individual or couple who have agreed to assume those rights and responsibilities.
Adoption

Every decision made in the field of adoption (legal and social work) is governed by the principle of “What is in the Best Interest of the Child”.
Client Barriers to Adoption

- “How can I carry the baby for nine months and give it up?”
- Fear that child will be abused
- Cultural barriers
- Counselor is not equipped to discuss adoption option
- Extended family will not permit
- Peer Pressure and Peer Imitation
- Societal Enabling
- Feels lack of control
- Immature
- Need for love from the baby
- Tactic for maintaining relationship with the Father of the baby.
Professional Barriers to Adoption

- Cultural Barriers
- High Case Loads
- Professional Ignorance
- Personal Agendas
- Client has “made up her mind” and is not interested in adoption

- Concern about lack of adoption resources
- Distrust of adoption agency
- Hospital policy
- Prejudge client’s decision
Addressing the Barriers

• Education
  - Understanding the adoption process
  - Understanding the empowering effect of choice
  - Understanding that adoption is a child-centered option

• Skills
  - Utilizing accurate adoption language
  - Utilizing available adoption resources
The Importance of Accurate Adoption Language

- Helps the patient better understand her options
- Does not attack the patient emotionally
- Does not place judgments on her choices
Adoption Language

• Giving away a baby vs. Making an adoption plan

• Keeping baby vs. Parenting baby

• Real parent vs. Biological parent or Birth parent
The Adoption Process

- Inquiry
  - Client can call, email or text for info
  - Inquiry packet
- Counselor meeting
- Live at home or in Gladney’s dorm
- Caseworker assignment
- Free adoption counseling, medical care, legal services and education opportunities
- Choosing adoptive parents
Adoption Process Continued

• Face to face meeting with adoptive parents
• Hospital plan
• Delivery
• Possibly signing relinquishment
• Placement
• After-care
  • Post Adoption
  • Next Steps
Services to Birthmothers
All Services are FREE for Birthmothers

- Medical care
  - Medicaid office on Gladney’s campus
- Living Assistance
  - Live at home
  - Live on Gladney’s campus
- Counseling
- Legal services
- Educational services
- Life long post adoption services including Counseling and Registry information and assistance
Services Which an Adoption Agency May Provide

- Counseling
- Medical Services
- Legal Services
- Ability to choose adoptive parents
- Pregnancy related expenses
- Limited living expenses
What Expenses May Not be Paid

- Car payments
- Anything that would induce a woman to choose adoption over parenting
- Cash for expenses
Addressing Legal Issues

• In the state of Texas, birthmothers cannot sign their relinquishment documents until at least 48 hours after delivery. Once she has signed, it is irrevocable.

• Alleged birthfathers can sign their waiver before the baby is born.
What is a hospital plan?

Before delivery, clients and their caseworker develop a hospital plan. This plan can include the following:

- Manner of birth
- Who is allowed to visit and who can be present during labor and delivery
- If she plans to room in with baby

However, like any patient, she may change her mind about some of her wishes.
Unplanned Adoptions

You may experience a patient who has not made a plan for her pregnancy and decides she wants to speak to an adoption professional about adoption. This may happen due to:

• Emotional denial of pregnancy
• Drug use or jail incarceration

Follow your hospital’s policies

If she tests positive for drugs:

• Call CPS, but you can also call an adoption agency. This allows the patient to be proactive in making a plan for her baby
• She can then chose the parents and receive updates like any other Gladney client.
What is a third party release?

It is a legal document that must be signed by 2 witnesses and a notary.

The release is used when the baby is leaving the hospital with anyone other than the biological parents.

- Caseworker
- Transitional care parents
- Adoptive parents
Legal Issues

Why it is necessary for Gladney to have medical records for the baby before the baby leaves the hospital?

• The adoptive parents must have the medical records before they can legally leave the state with the baby.

• Medical records often contain additional information the birthmother may not have disclosed—such as drug use, additional sexual partners or venereal diseases.

• It is important to know this information before the adoptive parents take placement of the baby.

• This information also allows Gladney or the adoptive parents to provide medical care after the baby leaves the hospital.
How to Treat a Patient Who is Making an Adoption Plan

Please remember:

• She is a mother just like any other patient
• She has been working on this parenting plan for several months
• She has special needs and concerns
  • She is grieving- leaving hospital without baby
  • She needs your care and empathy
Adoption Resources

- Accurate Adoption Language
- “What Do I Say to a Client Who Says” (addressing the barriers)
- Katelyn’s Story
- Megan’s Story
- Gladney.org and Pregnancyhotline.org
- Gladney.TV
- Decision Making Guide
- Best Practices Guide for Hospitals
- Pregnancy Quiz
Questions and Answers

We are here to help and provide answers and solutions to your adoption needs

Contact Information:

• Receptionist – 817-922-6000
• 1-800-GLADNEY
• Amy Shore: 832-495-8333
• Amy.shore@gladney.org