



Maternal Cardiac Safety Workshop

Participant Workbook

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Date: _____

"Together, we can improve maternal heart health through education, awareness, and early recognition."

Recognize. Respond. Advocate. Save Lives.

Welcome to the Workshop

Thank you for joining Let's Talk PPCM for this Maternal Cardiac Safety Workshop. This workbook is designed to help you engage with the material, reflect on survivor experiences, strengthen your knowledge of maternal cardiac warning signs, and identify actions you can take in your own community or practice.

Workshop Learning Objectives

- Understand the basics of peripartum cardiomyopathy (PPCM) and why early recognition matters.
- Recognize maternal cardiac warning signs that may require further evaluation or urgent escalation.
- Understand the importance of listening to patients and taking persistent symptoms seriously.
- Explore health equity and barriers that can contribute to delayed diagnosis.
- Identify practical steps for education, advocacy, communication, and follow-up.

How to Use This Workbook

Use the pages to take notes, answer questions, complete activities, and record your personal action steps. There are no perfect answers to reflection questions—the goal is to connect the information to your own experience and role.

Pre-Workshop Knowledge Check

Complete this short check before the workshop begins. Your responses help you identify what you already know and what you hope to learn.

1. PPCM is a form of heart muscle weakness that can develop during late pregnancy or after delivery.

True / False

2. Which symptom should be taken seriously when it is new, severe, persistent, or worsening?

A. Shortness of breath B. Swelling C. Extreme fatigue D. All of the above

3. Patients should feel comfortable reporting symptoms that concern them, even when those symptoms may overlap with normal pregnancy or postpartum changes.

True / False

4. Why is early recognition important?

A. It may allow earlier evaluation and treatment B. It prevents every complication C. It eliminates the need for follow-up D. None

5. Which healthcare approach is most helpful when a patient says something feels wrong?

A. Listen and assess B. Dismiss the concern C. Wait indefinitely D. Ignore persistent symptoms

6. Maternal cardiac health can be affected by barriers related to access, communication, bias, and health inequities.

True / False

7. One thing I hope to learn today is:

Understanding PPCM

Peripartum cardiomyopathy (PPCM) is a form of heart muscle weakness that develops toward the end of pregnancy or in the months following delivery. Because some symptoms can overlap with expected pregnancy or postpartum changes, recognizing patterns, changes, severity, and persistence is important.

Knowledge Check

1. What does PPCM stand for?

2. When can PPCM develop?

3. Why is early recognition important?

4. Name one symptom that may be mistaken for a normal pregnancy or postpartum change.

5. What is one new fact you learned about PPCM?

6. Who in your community could benefit from learning about PPCM?

7. What questions do you still have about PPCM?

Recognizing Signs & Symptoms

Maternal cardiac warning signs may be overlooked when they are attributed to pregnancy, postpartum recovery, stress, or lack of sleep. The goal is not to diagnose yourself or another person, but to recognize concerning changes and encourage appropriate medical evaluation.

Activity: What Would You Do?

For each scenario, consider what you would notice, what questions you would ask, and what next step may be appropriate.

Scenario 1: A postpartum mother reports new or worsening shortness of breath that is interfering with normal activities.

What concerns you? What would you do or recommend next?

Scenario 2: A mother notices persistent swelling and says she feels significantly more tired than expected.

What concerns you? What would you do or recommend next?

Scenario 3: A patient repeatedly reports that something feels wrong but feels her concerns have not been fully addressed.

What concerns you? What would you do or recommend next?

Signs & Symptoms Reflection

1. List three symptoms that may be associated with PPCM or other maternal cardiac concerns.

2. Which symptoms can be mistaken for normal pregnancy or postpartum recovery?

3. Why should persistent or worsening symptoms be taken seriously?

4. What symptom or change would prompt you to seek immediate medical attention?

5. How confident do you feel recognizing warning signs after today's training?

☐ Very Confident ☐ Somewhat Confident ☐ Need More Training

6. What did you learn about listening to patients when symptoms persist?

7. What action will you take if you suspect a maternal cardiac concern?

Health Equity & Survivor Stories

Survivor stories help us understand the human impact of delayed recognition, communication barriers, and gaps in maternal care. They also remind us that every patient deserves to be heard and taken seriously.

1. What did you learn about disparities in maternal heart health?

2. Why is it important to listen when a patient says something feels wrong?

3. What part of the survivor story shared today impacted you the most?

4. What emotions or thoughts did the story bring up for you?

5. How can survivor stories improve healthcare?

6. What barriers may prevent women from receiving timely evaluation or diagnosis?

7. What can healthcare professionals and community partners do to help reduce disparities?

Medical Education

Presented by Dr. Njeri Kuria, M.D.

Use this section to capture key information from the medical presentation. Always follow current clinical guidance and the policies of your organization when responding to patient concerns.

1. What medical information stood out most during the presentation?

2. What diagnostic tests or evaluations may be considered when PPCM is suspected?

3. Why is follow-up care important?

4. What questions would you ask a patient experiencing concerning symptoms?

5. What did you learn about multidisciplinary care?

6. What information will you share with coworkers after this training?

7. What is one takeaway you will immediately apply in practice?

Case Study: Recognize. Respond. Advocate.

A 29-year-old mother is several weeks postpartum. She reports that she has become increasingly short of breath, feels unusually exhausted, and has noticed swelling that has not improved. She says she mentioned these symptoms previously but is still concerned because they are getting worse.

Discuss the following:

1. What warning signs do you notice?

2. What additional questions would you ask?

3. Why is it important not to dismiss these symptoms?

4. What would appropriate escalation or medical evaluation look like in your setting?

5. How could patient education help this mother advocate for herself?

Patient Communication & Advocacy

Effective communication can help create safer maternal care. Consider how you can respond when a patient expresses concern, especially when symptoms are persistent or worsening.

1. Write one sentence you could use to acknowledge a patient's concern.

2. What questions can help clarify when symptoms began and whether they are changing?

3. How can healthcare professionals communicate uncertainty while still taking symptoms seriously?

4. What can a patient or family member do if they feel their concerns have not been addressed?

5. What role can community organizations and survivor advocates play in maternal cardiac education?

Taking Action

Awareness matters most when it leads to action. Use this page to identify how you will apply what you learned.

1. How will today's workshop change your practice, work, or daily life?

2. Who will you share this information with?

3. What additional PPCM or maternal cardiac education would you like to receive?

4. How did this workshop impact your understanding of maternal heart health?

5. What is one action you can take within the next 30 days?

My Maternal Cardiac Safety Commitment

I commit to using what I learned today to support safer maternal heart health through education, awareness, listening, and appropriate action.

Three actions I commit to taking:

1.

2.

3.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Post-Workshop Knowledge Check

Complete this check after the workshop. Compare your answers with your pre-workshop responses and reflect on what you learned.

1. In your own words, what is PPCM?

2. Name two maternal cardiac warning signs that should not be ignored.

3. Why can PPCM sometimes be difficult to recognize?

4. What is one reason early recognition matters?

5. What is one way healthcare professionals can better listen to patients?

6. Name one barrier that can contribute to delayed diagnosis or care.

7. What is your biggest takeaway from today's workshop?

Workshop Evaluation

Your feedback helps Let's Talk PPCM improve future workshops and demonstrate the value of maternal cardiac education.

1. The workshop increased my understanding of maternal cardiac health.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

2. The information was relevant to my role or community.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

3. The survivor story helped me understand the patient perspective.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

4. I feel more confident recognizing maternal cardiac warning signs.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

5. The workshop encouraged me to take action or share what I learned.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

6. What was the most valuable part of today's workshop?

7. What could we improve or add?

8. Would you recommend this training to others?

☐ Yes ☐ No

9. Would you like to stay connected with Let's Talk PPCM?

☐ Volunteer ☐ Donate ☐ Partner ☐ Invite us to speak ☐ Receive updates

Maternal Cardiac Safety Resources

Continue your learning and share reliable educational resources with your organization, colleagues, patients, families, and community.

Resources Included in the Maternal Cardiac Safety Kit

- PPCM Clinical Quick Reference Guide
- Symptom & Risk Checklist
- BNP Testing Guidance Overview
- Maternal Red Flag Escalation Tool
- Patient Education Handouts
- Provider Scripts
- Workshop Participant Workbook
- Workshop Completion Certificate

Keep Learning

Use current clinical guidelines, trusted maternal health organizations, and your healthcare system's protocols for clinical decision-making. This workbook is an educational resource and is not a substitute for professional medical evaluation or clinical judgment.

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Additional Notes

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Stay Connected

Website: www.letstalkppcm.org

Email: info@letstalkppcm.org

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Ways You Can Help

- Donate to support free PPCM education and awareness.
- Sponsor Maternal Cardiac Safety Kits for healthcare organizations.
- Invite Let's Talk PPCM to speak at your hospital, conference, or community event.
- Share PPCM resources with families and healthcare professionals.
- Become a volunteer or advocate.

Your support helps fund free educational workshops, Maternal Cardiac Safety Kits, awareness campaigns, survivor resources, research advocacy, and projects that improve maternal heart health.

"Your voice can help save a mother's life."

Recognize. Respond. Advocate. Save Lives.