AWHONN
PROMOTING THE HEALTH OF WOMEN AND NEWBORNS
RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE PROGRAM

# Business Case for Adoption of the AWHONN Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) Train-the-Trainer Program

## Every Patient, Every Interaction, Every Time.

### Executive Summary

The AWHONN Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) Train-the-Trainer (TTT) Program offers hospitals and birthing centers a scalable, evidence-based approach to strengthening patient experience, advancing equitable care, supporting clinical quality, and fostering a sustainable culture of respectful maternity care.

Through a structured education and implementation model, participating facilities develop internal RMC trainers who educate staff, lead practice improvements, and support long-term organizational change. The program combines standardized education, implementation resources, data collection tools, and expert guidance to help facilities translate evidence into everyday clinical practice.

Investing in the RMC TTT Program is a strategic commitment to patient experience, quality improvement, workforce development, and organizational excellence, while establishing a pathway toward national AWHONN RMC Designation.

### Why Invest in the AWHONN RMC TTT Program?

**Strengthens Patient Experience and Community Trust**

According to the CDC (2023), approximately 1 in 5 women surveyed reported mistreatment during maternity care, with higher rates among Black, Hispanic, and multiracial respondents. Additionally, 45% reported withholding questions or concerns during their care (CDC, 2023). These findings reinforce the need for consistent, respectful communication, informed decision-making, and equitable treatment.

The RMC TTT Program supports practices that:

- Promote dignity, autonomy, privacy, and informed choice.
- Strengthen communication and shared decision-making.
- Foster culturally responsive and trauma-informed care.
- Build patient trust and support positive maternity care experiences.

These improvements align with organizational patient experience priorities, community engagement, and patient-centered quality initiatives.

**Aligns With National Maternal Health and Quality Priorities**

National organizations increasingly emphasize patient-centered, equitable, and high-quality maternity care. The RMC TTT Program helps translate these priorities into practice by:

- Integrating respectful care principles into organizational policies and clinical workflows.
- Strengthening patient engagement, communication, and shared decision-making.
- Supporting consistency and accountability across maternity care settings.
- Establishing mechanisms to evaluate implementation and improvement.

Participation demonstrates a proactive commitment to advancing maternal health quality and equity while supporting organizational readiness for evolving quality expectations.

**Supports Clinical Quality, Patient Safety, and Consistency of Care**
Respectful communication, patient engagement, and collaborative decision-making are essential components of safe, high-quality maternity care.

The RMC TTT Program equips staff with practical strategies to:

- Recognize and address barriers to respectful care.
- Strengthen communication among patients, families, and healthcare teams.
- Promote psychological safety and patient participation in care decisions.
- Support consistent, evidence-based practices across patient populations.
- Identify opportunities for improvement through assessment and data collection.

Integrating these principles into routine care reinforces existing quality and patient safety initiatives and supports a more consistent patient experience.

**Builds Sustainable Workforce Capacity and Organizational Culture**
The Train-the-Trainer model provides a sustainable and scalable approach to education and practice improvement.

By preparing 1–2 internal trainers per facility, organizations establish internal expertise to:

- Deliver standardized RMC education to maternity care staff.
- Incorporate respectful care principles into onboarding and continuing professional development.
- Support implementation across departments and clinical disciplines.
- Promote staff engagement, leadership development, and accountability.
- Sustain practice improvements beyond the initial training period.

Developing internal instructors reduces reliance on repeated external training and creates lasting organizational capacity for education and culture change.

**Provides a Structured, Evidence-Based Implementation Pathway**
The RMC TTT Program is grounded in AWHONN's RMC Framework and Evidence-Based Guideline and supported by the RMC Implementation Toolkit.

Resources include:

- The 10-Step C.A.R.E. P.A.A.T.T.H. implementation pathway.
- Organizational readiness assessments.
- Sample policies, procedures, and workflow resources.
- Patient-facing educational materials.
- Quality improvement, data collection, and evaluation tools.

These standardized, adaptable resources reduce the need for facilities to independently develop educational and implementation materials while supporting a coordinated approach to organizational improvement.

**Supports Readiness for National RMC Designation**
Participation in the RMC TTT Program provides a foundation for pursuing AWHONN RMC Designation, which recognizes facilities demonstrating implementation and impact of respectful maternity care practices.

The three designation levels are:

- Bronze — Implementation: Demonstrates implementation of respectful maternity care practices.
- Silver — Perception Impact: Demonstrates impact on patient and staff perceptions of care.
- Gold — Outcome Impact: Demonstrates impact on patient outcomes.

The RMC TTT Program supports development of the education, infrastructure, and implementation processes necessary to pursue designation. Designation requires a separate application and appraisal process.

## Program Overview and Deliverables

**Participating facilities receive:**

- Expert guidance in developing a comprehensive RMC implementation strategy.
- Training and preparation of internal RMC instructor candidates.
- Access to standardized RMC Participant Workshop education for facility staff.

- Virtual foundational education and an in-person instructor workshop.
- Structured implementation coaching and post-training support.
- Access to data collection and benchmarking tools.
- Participation in AWHONN's national RMC learning community and peer network.
- Resources from the RMC Implementation Toolkit, including policies, templates, and quality improvement tools.
- Support for ongoing implementation and future RMC Designation readiness.

Together, these resources provide a comprehensive approach to education, organizational change, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability.

## Organizational Commitment and Implementation Responsibilities

Successful implementation requires collaboration between organizational leadership, clinical educators, frontline staff, and quality improvement teams.

**Participating facilities commit to:**

- Leadership Support: Identify an executive sponsor and establish organizational support for RMC implementation.
- Internal Trainers: Select and support qualified instructor candidates who will lead education and implementation efforts.
- Staff Education: Allocate protected time and appropriate resources for staff participation in the RMC Participant Workshop.
- Implementation Planning: Establish organizational goals, timelines, and responsibilities aligned with the RMC Framework.
- Data Collection and Evaluation: Participate in appropriate data collection activities to monitor implementation and evaluate progress.
- Sustainability: Integrate respectful care principles into organizational policies, workflows, onboarding, and ongoing professional development.

These commitments support successful translation of education into clinical practice and promote sustained organizational improvement.

## Financial Considerations and Return on Investment

### Program Investment

The RMC TTT Program offers a scalable investment model based on facility birth volume, the number of instructor candidates, and the number of staff requiring education.

### Organizational Value and Potential Return on Investment

Beyond the initial investment, the RMC TTT Program creates opportunities for long-term organizational value.

**Potential benefits include:**

- Education Efficiency: Internal instructors provide a sustainable approach to standardized staff education.
- Workforce Development: Staff gain professional development, teaching, and leadership opportunities.
- Patient Experience: Improved communication and patient engagement may contribute to more positive experiences of care and community trust.
- Clinical Quality and Risk Management: Reinforcement of respectful communication, informed consent, and shared decision-making supports patient safety and risk management priorities.
- Operational Consistency: Standardized education and implementation resources promote more consistent care practices across departments.
- Organizational Recognition: Progress toward national RMC Designation may strengthen the facility's professional reputation and demonstrate its commitment to maternal health improvement.

Although the financial impact will vary by organization, these benefits provide opportunities to improve operational efficiency, strengthen workforce capability, and support long-term organizational performance.

## Measuring Success and Organizational Return

Facilities can evaluate the effectiveness and value of their investment through established performance measures.

| Priority Area | Suggested Measures |
|---|---|
| Staff Education | Percentage of staff completing RMC education; number of qualified internal trainers |
| Implementation Progress | Completion of organizational goals and progress through the 10-Step C.A.R.E. P.A.A.T.T.H. |
| Patient Experience | Changes in patient-reported respectful maternity care measures and patient experience feedback |
| Staff Experience | Changes in staff-reported perceptions, knowledge, and attitudes related to RMC |
| Clinical Quality | Relevant communication, informed consent, and patient safety quality indicators |
| Operational Sustainability | Integration of RMC into policies, workflows, onboarding, and ongoing education |
| Designation Readiness | Progress toward Bronze, Silver, or Gold RMC Designation criteria |

Facilities are encouraged to establish baseline measures, identify improvement targets, and monitor progress at regular intervals.

These measures support accountability, demonstrate implementation progress, and help leadership evaluate both the organizational and financial value of the program over time.

### Recommendation

Adoption of the AWHONN Respectful Maternity Care Train-the-Trainer Program is recommended as a strategic investment in patient experience, clinical quality, workforce development, and sustainable organizational improvement.

The program provides more than staff education. It offers a structured, evidence-based approach to building internal expertise, strengthening organizational culture, supporting measurable improvement, and advancing readiness for national RMC Designation.

Through a scalable investment and sustainable implementation model, participating facilities can strengthen their capacity to deliver consistent, safe, equitable, and dignified maternity care. Investing in respectful maternity care is an investment in patients, staff, and the future of maternal health—Every Patient, Every Interaction, Every Time.

### References and Program Information

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023). *Vital Signs: Maternity Care Experiences — United States, April 2023*. https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/wr/mm7235e1.htm

AWHONN. *Respectful Maternity Care Program*. https://awhonn.org/respectful-maternity-care/

AWHONN. *Respectful Maternity Care Train-the-Trainer Program*. https://awhonn.org/respectful-maternity-care/train-the-trainer/

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# EXECUTIVE INVESTMENT SUMMARY

## AWHONN Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) Train-the-Trainer Program

Approve participation in the AWHONN RMC Train-the-Trainer Program to establish internal educator capacity, implement standardized respectful maternity care practices, measure progress, and support future RMC Designation readiness.

### Why this investment matters

| | |
|---|---|
| Patient experience<br>Quality and consistency | Promote dignity, informed choice, respectful communication, and trust.<br>Integrate evidence-based RMC principles into care processes and improvement efforts. |
| Workforce sustainability | Prepare 1–2 internal trainers to educate staff and reinforce practices over time. |
| Implementation readiness | Use structured tools, coaching, and a 10-step pathway to advance and evaluate change. |

### Facility-specific investment estimate

| Cost component | Planning amount |
|---|---|
| Annual facility participation fee (birth-volume tier) | $_____ |
| Instructor training (number of candidates × current fee) | $_____ |
| Participant education (staff × applicable fee) | $_____ |
| Travel, staff time, and implementation resources | $_____ |
| TOTAL REQUESTED INITIAL INVESTMENT | $_____ |

Budget assumptions: _____ annual births | _____ instructors | _____ staff learners.
*Confirm current AWHONN pricing, any discounts, and travel support before submission.*

### Implementation commitments

Executive sponsor and cross-functional implementation lead; protected time for instructor preparation and staff training; a facility-level implementation plan; routine data collection, performance review, and integration into onboarding and policies.

### Measures of success

Track staff training completion and trainer capacity; progress through C.A.R.E. P.A.A.T.T.H.; patient- and staff-reported RMC experiences; policy/workflow integration; and progress toward applicable Bronze, Silver, or Gold Designation criteria.

### Approval requested

Authorize program enrollment and the initial budget of $_____; designate an executive sponsor and implementation lead; and approve a facility-specific education and evaluation plan.

Approving leader: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____