**Counseling practice points for early pregnancy loss:**

**suggestions and phrases to support a patient-centered**

**approach to EPL care**

**Suggestions**

* DO consider remaining silent after providing initial results or information, allowing the patient to process and experience her emotions. Follow up with open-ended questions and active listening.
* DO determine if the pregnancy is desired, as this will be important in helping the patient arrive at emotional resolution and a plan.
* DO normalize emotions and validate feelings.
* DO be thoughtful disclosing personal information. Avoid giving your personal opinions about what patients “should” do. Listen to the patient and focus on asking questions.
* DO encourage the patient to seek emotional support from others.
* DO provide reassurance. DON’T guarantee that “everything will be alright.”
* DO assure the patient that you will be available to her through the process and answer questions as they arise
* DO use neutral responses whenever possible.

**Phrases/questions**

* *What is the hardest part of this for you?*
* *What would be helpful right now?*
* *Can you tell me about this pregnancy?*
* *When did you find out you were pregnant? Who knows you are pregnant?*
* *A wide range of feelings are normal.*
* *I’m happy to provide you with information about your pregnancy/miscarriage…. What would be helpful to you right now?*
* *Who might be helpful to talk to about your miscarriage?*
* *I know it’s hard right now…and we are here to help you through the process.*
* *We are here for you and are happy to answer your questions – now or after you go home.*
* *See back side for neutral phrases and questions*

Neutral phrases and questions:

* *That is a question a lot of people wonder about.*
* *I’m glad you asked that question.*
* *That’s a difficult question for me to answer…I’ll try and we may want to ask our provider.*
* *Tell me more about what is concerning you.*
* *What additional information might be helpful?*
* *A wide range of emotions are really normal.*

* *It is expected that you’ll have mixed feelings about this.*
* *Some other patients I have spoken with have experienced…*
* *It is my understanding that…*
* *How would that work for you?*
* *What would be helpful to you?*
* *What questions do you have?*
* *What’s the hardest part of this experience for you?*

Adapted from Wallace, Robin R. et al: “Counseling women with early pregnancy failure: Utilizing evidence, preserving preference.” 2010