RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE DESIGNATION GUIDE

AWHONN
PROMOTING THE HEALTH OF WOMEN AND NEWBORNS

RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE PROGRAM

RESPECT

Every Patient
Every Interaction
Every Time

The Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) Designation is a national recognition program created by AWHONN for hospitals and birthing centers that demonstrate a sustained commitment to respectful maternity care.

Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) is a model of care that upholds fundamental human rights by promoting equitable access to evidence-based, person-centered care and honors the needs, values, and preferences of individuals and families throughout pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period.

DESIGNATION TIERS

Facilities may be awarded one of three RMC Designation tiers based on demonstrated practice, impact, and outcomes:

	**Implementation**	Implementation of RMC strategies and practices
	**Perception Impact**	Impact on perceptions of care among patients and staff
	**Outcome Impact**	Demonstrated improvement in patient outcomes

Each designation level builds on the previous level, so facilities must meet all earlier requirements before advancing. Designations are valid for three years, after which facilities must submit documentation showing they still meet the standards. While moving to a higher level is encouraged, maintaining your current designation is equally valuable and fully acceptable.

WHAT YOU'LL RECEIVE

- National recognition and promotion
- Use of official RMC Designation Seal
- Access to tools, education, and support
- Peer networking and improvement opportunities
- Commitment to dignity and equity in care

DESIGNATION PROCESS

1. Register your intent to apply and receive access to the designation application.
2. Submit all required documentation for review
3. The RMC Designation Advisory Board will review submitted materials to determine alignment with designation criteria and award the final tier.
4. Sites will be notified of designation award and provided with a kit for showcasing their RMC Designation.

APPLICATION FOR RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE DESIGNATION

This guide is designed to assist applicants with preparing and submitting their RMC designation application. It outlines the required information and supporting documentation needed for a complete submission. Applicants are encouraged to print or save this guide for reference and to use it as a worksheet throughout the application process.

- ✓ What date was the Intent to Apply for RMC Designation payment submitted?
- ✓ Please upload a copy of the receipt as verification of the intent to apply designation payment. (optional)

FACILITY INFORMATION

FACILITY
Name:
Address:

PRIMARY CONTACT	
Name:	
Phone Number:	**Email:**

SECONDARY CONTACT	
Name:	
Phone Number:	**Email:**

SYSTEM AFFILIATION

Is your facility a part of a larger system/organization?	
Y / N	If yes, please provide the name of the system/organization:

FACILITY CAPACITY & VOLUME

Annual birth volume (previous calendar year): [Choose one]						
25-249 ☐	250-499 ☐	500-999 ☐	1,000-1,999 ☐	2,000-3,999 ☐	4,000-6,999 ☐	≥ 7,000 ☐

Total number of beds in the facility:

LEVELS OF CARE

Maternal Level of Care

Please identify the level of maternal care that best represents your facility: [Choose One]				
Accredited Birth Center ☐	**Level I: Basic Care** ☐	**Level II: Specialty Care** ☐	**Level III: Specialty Care** ☐	**Level IV: Regional Perinatal Health Care Center** ☐

https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/obstetric-care-consensus/articles/2019/08/levels-of-maternal-care

Neonatal Level of Care

Please identify the level of neonatal care that best represents your facility: [Choose One]			
Level I: Well Newborn Nursery ☐	**Level II: Special Care Nursery** ☐	**Level III: Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)** ☐	**Level IV: Regional NICU** ☐

https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/130/3/587/30212/Levels-of-Neonatal-Care

Patient Care Level

Please identify the level of patient care that best represents your facility: [Choose One]			
PRIMARY: General health, first point of contact ☐	**SECONDARY:** Specialized care for specific conditions ☐	**TERTIARY:** Highly specialized, complex procedures in hospitals ☐	**QUATERNARY:** Advanced, experimental care ☐

Facility type: [Select all that apply]		
Academic ☐	Community ☐	Critical Access ☐
Free-Standing Birth Center ☐	Rural ☐	Suburban ☐
Urban ☐	For-Profit ☐	Nonprofit ☐

PATIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Race/Ethnicity

Please indicate the percentage of your perinatal patients from each racial/ethnic category served during the previous calendar year.

White	Black or African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Hispanic/ Latino	Non-Hispanic/ Latino	Other (unknown, prefer not to answer)
%	%	%	%	%	%	%

Languages

Approximately what percentage of your perinatal patients identify English as their primary language?
%

Which interpreter services are available in your facility? [Select All That Apply]

In person	Virtual (video)	Telephone	Other
☐	☐	☐	☐

Payer Mix

Please indicate the percentage of your perinatal patients in each of the following payment categories during the previous calendar year:		
Private Insurance	Medicaid	Self-Pay
%	%	%

STAFFING AND CAPACITY

Perinatal Staffing

	Number
Total number of nurses in the perinatal unit (obstetric emergency department, antepartum, labor and delivery, postpartum/newborn; include full-time, part-time, p.r.n.):	
Number of ancillary staff in the perinatal unit (certified nursing assistants [CNAs], technicians, unit clerks, etc.):	
Number of lactation team members:	
Number of perinatal education and coordination staff (e.g., birth coordinators, clinical nurse specialists [CNS], educators):	
Average percentage vacancy rate for licensed nursing positions in the perinatal unit over the past year:	%
Percentage of FTEs/staffing hours covered with temporary staff (travelers, seasonal, locums):	%

NICU Staffing (if applicable)

Do you have a separate NICU/SCN in your facility?	Y / N
Number of nurses in the NICU/SCN (including full-time, part-time, p.r.n.)	
Number of neonatal education and coordination staff (e.g., CNS, educators)	
Number of ancillary staff in the NICU/SCN (CNAs, technicians, unit clerks, etc.)	
Average percentage vacancy rate for licensed nursing positions in the NICU/SCN over the past year	

STAFFING STANDARDS

https://www.awhonn.org/resources-and-information/published-resources/staffing-standards/

How often does your unit follow AWHONN's Staffing Standards (Standards for Professional Registered Nurse Staffing for Perinatal Units)?					
100% of the time	75%-99% of the time	50%-74% of the time	25%-49% of the time	Less than 25% of the time	Unsure
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

ACCREDITATION & RECOGNITION

Accreditation Bodies

Please indicate your facility's current accrediting body (Select One)					
Center for Improvement in Healthcare Quality (CIHQ)	Det Norske Veritas Healthcare Quality, Inc. (DNV)	Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program (HFAP)	The Joint Commission	None	Other (Please specify)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Designation & Recognitions

Please indicate if your facility/unit currently holds any of the following designations or recognitions: [Select Checkbox for each of the items on this list- minimum 1]	
☐ ANCC Well-Being Excellence	☐ Safe Sleep Certification
☐ Baby-Friendly	☐ The Joint Commission's Advanced Certification in Perinatal Care
☐ Blue Distinction Centers for Maternity Care	☐ The Joint Commission's Maternal Levels of Care Verification
☐ CMS Birthing Friendly Designation	☐ U.S. News and World Report designation
☐ ANCC Magnet recognition	☐ None of the above
☐ ANCC Pathway to Excellence	

Please list any other designations or recognitions your facility/unit has achieved:

Is your facility/unit part of a perinatal quality collaborative?	Y / N

If applicable, describe your facility/unit's participation in perinatal collaboratives to improve patient outcomes:

RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE (RMC) IMPLEMENTATION

Date when you began integrating AWHONN's elements of RMC and the 10-Step C.A.R.E. P.A.A.T.T.H. into your facility: [Month/Year]

Which types of support or resources did you utilize during RMC implementation? [Select All That Apply]	
☐ Webinar/virtual education session	☐ Consultation with RMC experts or faculty
☐ RMC Implementation Toolkit	☐ Organizational leadership support
☐ RMC Train-the-Trainer Program	Other (please specify):
☐ Onsite training/workshop	

What prompted your RMC journey?

RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE BRONZE DESIGNATION APPLICATION

PURPOSE

The Bronze Designation recognizes facilities that have successfully implemented Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) strategies and practices using the 10-Step C.A.R.E. P.A.A.T.T.H. framework.

Applicants must demonstrate foundational progress in establishing structures, policies, education, and team-based processes that promote respectful, equitable maternity care for all patients.

Please ensure all patient identifiers have been redacted on any documentation submitted.

Each upload field accepts only one file. If you have multiple documents for an item, please combine them into a single file before uploading.

Date of bronze application submission:

DEMONSTRATING PERCEPTION IMPACT

Intent

To demonstrate the organization's commitment to Respectful Maternity Care through the implementation of foundational policies, education, and practices. This level reflects readiness to support respectful, individualized care consistently across the organization and to build the infrastructure needed to assess perception and outcomes over time.

STEP 1: CONFIRM COMMITMENT

GOAL: Demonstrate visible and actionable leadership and staff commitment to Respectful Maternity Care.

Required Uploads

☐	**Leadership commitment evidence:** Upload a signed statement, letter, or official communication from executive or nursing leadership confirming the organization's commitment to implementing RMC practices. [Upload]
☐	**Organizational commitment:** Provide evidence of how stakeholders report ongoing RMC progress to nursing leadership and governance groups. Include at least one example demonstrating active oversight, such as a meeting agenda, minutes, or summary report. [Upload]
☐	**Staff engagement:** Submit at least one visible example of staff commitment to RMC (e.g., photo of a commitment board, kickoff event, recognition display, or unit-based RMC activity). [Upload]
☐	**Staff demonstration of commitment:** Provide written or video testimonials from at least two staff members, describing how they plan to integrate RMC principles into their daily practice. [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to confirm commitment? [Upload]

STEP 2: ASSEMBLE TEAM

GOAL: Establish an interdisciplinary RMC implementation team that represents all disciplines and levels of care.

Required Uploads

☐	**Interdisciplinary team evidence:** Demonstrate that RMC meetings include input from all members of the interdisciplinary team. Documentation must include a committee roster identifying team members and their respective disciplines, along with meeting minutes that reflect collaborative discussion and contributions, or a narrative description outlining how interdisciplinary engagement is achieved. [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to assemble a team? [Upload]

STEP 3: RELATE READINESS

GOAL: Assess organizational readiness for change and identify opportunities to strengthen collaboration and capacity for RMC implementation.

Required Uploads

☐	**Staff culture readiness:** Provide documentation outlining opportunities and goals for strengthening staff relationships and collaboration (e.g., addressing incivility, psychological safety). Include an action plan demonstrating how activities are designed to promote team cohesiveness. [Upload]
☐	**Organizational RMC readiness:** Provide a completed RMC Readiness Assessment, demonstrating that your organization has evaluated readiness to implement RMC practices. [Upload]
☐	**Identify strengths and gaps:** Upload an analysis identifying organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to RMC implementation (e.g., SWOT or similar document). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to relate readiness? [Upload]

STEP 4: EDUCATE ALL

GOAL: Integrate Respectful Maternity Care principles into staff education to build awareness, enhance communication, and promote consistent, compassionate, and equitable care practices across all disciplines.

Required Uploads

☐	**Education plan:** Provide an education plan or curriculum outline demonstrating how RMC principles are being integrated into staff education. Include timelines, learning objectives, and multimodal delivery methods (e.g., in-person sessions, online modules, or staff huddles). [Upload]
☐	**Educational content:** Demonstrate staff can articulate the core principles of RMC (e.g., reflective responses, discussion notes, pre/post knowledge summary).
☐	**Training evidence:** Show that at least 90% of staff have been provided with RMC education (e.g., training schedules, sign-in sheets, attendance logs, or screenshots of completion records). [Upload]

☐	**Education sustainability plan:** Identify areas for improvement in RMC education and outline a plan for ongoing reinforcement. Upload an action plan or similar document that includes identified opportunities for improvement, recommended refresher or microlearning topics, and a schedule for periodic educational updates. [Upload]
☐	**Patient-facing education:** Upload one example of RMC educational material provided to patients or families (e.g., RMC patient brochure, multilingual infographic, or poster displayed in patient areas). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to educate all? [Upload]

STEP 5: PROPOSE POLICY

GOAL: Develop and implement foundational policies and procedures that reflect and uphold RMC principles.

Required Uploads

☐	**Policy integration evidence:** Document at least one policy, procedure, or guideline that incorporates RMC principles allowing for individualized care. [Upload]
☐	**Patient-centered policy development**: Provide an example of a policy that was developed or revised with direct patient involvement. Describe the methods used to gather patient perspectives and explain how those lived experiences informed policy decisions, language, procedures, or practice changes. [Upload]
☐	**Policy review documentation:** Upload meeting notes, policy committee minutes, or review forms showing how existing policies were evaluated or revised to align with RMC values. [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to propose policy? [Upload]

STEP 6: ADAPT CULTURE

GOAL: Embed Respectful Maternity Care principles into organizational culture through consistent communication, collaboration, and reinforcement of respectful, equitable care practices.

Required Uploads

☐	**Patient-centered communication:** Provide evidence that patient-centered communication is practiced consistently (e.g., rounding logs, patient comments, or feedback demonstrating use of patient-centered prompts and patient involvement in care). [Upload]
☐	**Team communication integration:** Provide evidence that RMC tools are incorporated into daily team communication (e.g., huddle agendas, interdisciplinary plan-of-care discussions, or RN/provider examples demonstrating reinforcement of RMC practices). [Upload]
☐	**Structured debriefing practice:** Provide evidence of a standardized debriefing process that incorporates RMC principles (e.g., debrief plan; completed debrief forms addressing dignity, consent, autonomy, and respect). [Upload]
☐	**Increase access and opportunity:** Provide evidence of participation in an initiative that supports a population-focused need (e.g., equity initiative to increase access to resources). [Upload]
☐	**Leadership behavior modeling:** Provide evidence of team members demonstrating RMC behaviors (leadership rounding, staff reflections). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to adapt culture? [Upload]

STEP 7: ASSUME ACCOUNTABILITY

GOAL: Implement accountability structures that promote shared responsibility for Respectful Maternity Care and foster a culture of trust, transparency, and psychological safety.

Required Uploads

☐	**Psychological safety evidence:** Demonstrate how psychological safety and open communication are supported (e.g., antiretaliation program summary, discussion notes, or feedback tool results). [Upload]
☐	**Recognition and reinforcement:** Document recognition efforts for individuals or teams modeling RMC principles (e.g., Spotlight Cards, Champion acknowledgments, or recognition board photos). [Upload]
☐	**Community and advisory engagement:** Show how patient, family, or community voices are included in accountability and improvement efforts (e.g., Community Advisory Board roster, meeting minutes, or input summaries). [Upload]
☐	**Trust-building and feedback:** Upload examples of activities or materials that build trust and open dialogue within the care team (e.g., staff reflection exercises, or team debrief notes). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to assume accountability? [Upload]

STEP 8: TAILOR DATA MANAGEMENT

GOAL: Establish foundational data processes to monitor respectful care practices and identify opportunities for equitable improvement.

Required Uploads

☐	**Data management method:** Document a data management plan outlining how RMC outcomes are tracked, including defined metrics, reporting structure, and data sources (e.g., data management policy, sample data reports, reporting calendar, or leadership meeting agendas). [Upload]
☐	**Baseline patient experience metrics:** Demonstrate collection of baseline patient experience data and plans for data stratification to identify differences in outcomes related to respectful maternity care (e.g., HCAHPS reports, patient experience dashboards, or summary data). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to tailor data management? [Upload]

STEP 9: TEST MEASUREMENTS

GOAL: Test and measure Respectful Maternity Care practices using data-driven methods to evaluate progress and guide continuous improvement.

Required Uploads

☐	**Test improvement processes:** Document the implementation of an RMC improvement initiative, including the evaluation of tested changes, outcome reviews, and the method used to share results through a structured testing approach (e.g., Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle or similar). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to test measurements? [Upload]

STEP 10: HAVE A CELEBRATION

GOAL: Recognize and celebrate achievements in Respectful Maternity Care implementation to strengthen engagement, morale, and ongoing commitment.

Required Uploads

☐	**Celebrate achievements:** Show how your organization recognizes progress in implementing RMC practices (e.g., photos or summaries of recognition events, team acknowledgments, or communications highlighting RMC milestones). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to have a celebration? [Upload]

ATTESTATION

☐	**I CERTIFY THAT ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED IS ACCURATE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.**

Name:	
Title:	**Date:**

RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE SILVER DESIGNATION APPLICATION

PURPOSE

The Silver Designation recognizes facilities that demonstrate measurable perception-level impact, showing how Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) practices have advanced from implementation to influencing both patients' and staff's experiences of care. This level validates the integration of RMC principles into organizational systems, fostering sustained perception change across all levels of care.

Applicants must also meet all bronze criteria before submitting for silver designation.

Please ensure all patient identifiers have been redacted on any documentation submitted.

Each upload field accepts only one file. If you have multiple documents for an item, please combine them into a single file before uploading.

Date of silver application submission:

DEMONSTRATING PERCEPTION IMPACT

Intent

To validate the organization's ability to integrate Respectful Maternity Care principles across policies, processes, and culture, and to demonstrate perception changes among staff, patients, and leadership that reflect respectful, individualized care.

STEP 1: CONFIRM COMMITMENT

GOAL: Strengthen leadership and staff engagement through visible reinforcement of RMC values and measurable perception change.

Required Uploads

☐	**Staff and patient perceptions (staff narratives):** Upload staff-written narratives from at least two staff members describing how RMC has changed their practice, demonstrating greater awareness and integration of RMC. [Upload]
☐	**Provider involvement:** Document provider participation in advancing the RMC program to show ownership of RMC values (e.g., meeting roles, project leads, or education delivery). [Upload]
☐	**Unit/department progress board:** Submit photos and updates of an RMC progress board that includes metrics, champions, and goals, showing how unit teams monitor and celebrate RMC progress. [Upload]
☐	**Public demonstration of commitment:** Provide evidence of public visibility of RMC initiatives, showing how RMC is shared with external stakeholders (e.g., website screenshots, press releases, social-media posts, or news features). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to confirm commitment? [Upload]

STEP 2: ASSEMBLE TEAM

GOAL: Strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration by demonstrating shared perception of accountability and ownership for RMC outcomes.

Required Uploads

☐	**Practice change evidence:** Provide an example of a practice change that resulted from RMC steering or champion team collaboration. Include at least two of the following roles: nurse, provider, former patient, or community doula. Upload evidence that includes how the change was suggested, stakeholders involved, and a description of the new process (e.g., meeting minutes describing the decision, a narrative of the change process, and an updated roster showing included roles). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to assemble a team? [Upload]

STEP 3: RELATE READINESS

GOAL: Demonstrate organizational perception of readiness and capacity to sustain RMC practices through feedback and evaluation.

Required Uploads

☐	**Staff relationship and collaboration plan:** Upload documentation describing opportunities, goals, and actions taken to strengthen staff relationships and team cohesion. [Upload]
☐	**Readiness follow-up actions:** Provide evidence of how readiness findings have been acted upon to address identified barriers or opportunities (e.g., action plan updates, follow-up meeting minutes, or progress-tracking documents). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to relate readiness? [Upload]

STEP 4: EDUCATE ALL

GOAL: Reinforce perception of RMC as standard practice through continuous education and evaluation of learning impact.

Required Uploads

☐	**Expand education across departments:** Show that RMC education has been implemented across departments interacting with pregnant or postpartum patients (e.g., admitting, NICU, emergency department, pediatrics). Include departmental training rosters or cross-unit completion reports demonstrating engagement. [Upload]
☐	**Establish sustainable onboarding:** Document a structured onboarding process requiring all new clinical staff to complete RMC education within 6 months of hire (e.g., onboarding policy, compliance records, or completion timelines). [Upload]
☐	**Assess knowledge and skills gained:** Provide evidence of evaluation results demonstrating increased understanding of RMC principles, mitigation of implicit bias, and improved patient-provider trust (e.g., pre- and posttest results or assessment summaries). [Upload]
☐	**Evaluate behavior change:** Document staff and patient feedback regarding communication, dignity/privacy, and shared decision-making (e.g., anecdotal feedback, observation notes, or survey responses). [Upload]

☐	**Assess impact on organizational culture:** Show how RMC education has contributed to shared language, ethical discussions, and improved interdisciplinary collaboration (e.g., meeting notes, case reviews, or staff reflections). [Upload]
☐	**Plan for challenges and next steps:** Upload a plan outlining strategies for improving completion rates, reinforcing learning, sustaining education, and aligning with organizational goals (e.g., action plan, leadership reports, or strategic alignment documents). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to educate all? [Upload]

STEP 5: PROPOSE POLICY

GOAL: Ensure policies are perceived as equitable, patient-centered, and reflective of RMC principles across all patient experiences.

Required Uploads

☐	**Recognize doulas and labor support as part of the care team:** Upload an updated birth visitor policy that explicitly identifies doulas and designated birth support persons as equal members of the maternal care team, not general visitors. Include documentation showing the policy has been distributed to both staff and patients. [Upload]
☐	**Address disrespectful care through policy:** Provide the finalized policy outlining an accessible reporting mechanism for patients and families to raise concerns along with a defined debrief and follow-up plan to ensure appropriate, consistent responses. Include policy documents, reporting forms, and sample debrief documentation. [Upload]
☐	**Define debriefing practices incorporating RMC elements:** Upload the established policy or standard work describing structured, compassionate debriefs that include patient-centered reflection, RMC principles, and team documentation. Include the policy, debrief templates, and any staff or patient feedback reflecting positive experiences with the process. [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to propose policy? [Upload]

STEP 6: ADAPT CULTURE

GOAL: Strengthen organizational culture by demonstrating a shared perception of respect, dignity, and equity in care delivery.

Please ensure all patient identifiers have been redacted on any documentation submitted.

Required Uploads

☐	**Create safe avenues for patient feedback:** Demonstrate implementation of a clear, accessible grievance process for reporting disrespect or abuse (e.g., grievance policy, patient-facing grievance form). [Upload]
☐	**Use data for performance improvement:** Show how survey or perception data have been used to inform performance or quality improvement (PI/QI) initiatives (e.g., PI/QI reports, action plans linked to survey findings). [Upload]
☐	**Embed RMC into professional development:** Upload examples of clinical ladder or staff-led projects that incorporate RMC elements, demonstrating how professional development reinforces respectful care in practice (e.g., project summaries, outcome reports). [Upload]
☐	**Extend RMC culture across departments:** Document implementation of RMC strategies in departments such as NICU and emergency, including examples of respectful care and collaboration (e.g., training records, care-improvement examples). [Upload]
☐	**Implement initiatives that increase access and opportunity for patient populations:** Upload progress reports or preliminary outcome data showing launch or refinement of an initiative supporting respectful maternity care for specific patient populations (e.g., population-focused program plans or evaluation summaries). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to adapt culture? [Upload]

STEP 7: ASSUME ACCOUNTABILITY

GOAL: Reinforce shared perception of accountability through transparent reporting, recognition, and engagement at all levels.

Required Uploads

☐	**Formalize accountability and patient inclusion:** Document strategies for addressing breaches of respectful care, including process steps and patient/family participation in debriefing (e.g., written strategy documents, process flow diagrams, and sample debriefing records showing patient and family involvement in restorative processes). [Upload]
☐	**Elevate patient voice in accountability structures:** Provide evidence of an established or integrated patient and family advisory board that includes RMC within its scope. Upload advisory board rosters, meeting minutes, and agendas showing how patient and family input informs accountability and improvement efforts. [Upload]
☐	**Communicate patient preferences across the care team:** Demonstrate how individualized care preferences are consistently captured and shared across the care team (e.g., whiteboard examples, EMR screenshots, bedside handoff templates, written narratives, or testimonials from staff and patients). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to assume accountability? [Upload]

STEP 8: TAILOR DATA MANAGEMENT

GOAL: Use perception and outcome data to evaluate RMC impact and inform ongoing equity-focused improvements.

Required Uploads

☐	**Measure nurse attitudes and beliefs:** Demonstrate systematic data collection on nurse perceptions of RMC using a validated tool (e.g., Nurse Attitudes and Beliefs Questionnaire-Revised [NABQ-R], Lavine Attitudes and Beliefs about Birthing Scale). Include reports and stratified data summaries showing measurement of health care provider's perceptions over time. [Upload]
☐	**Measure patient experiences:** Provide documentation of patient perception data, collected using a validated RMC tool (e.g., Women's Perceptions of Respectful Maternity Care). Include survey reports and stratified patient experience data showing consistent measurement of perceptions and benchmark results over time. [Upload]
☐	**Validate patient experience using national metrics:** Demonstrate patient experience outcomes that meet or exceed national benchmarks, such as HCAHPS nurse and provider domain scores (e.g., data reports, dashboards, or comparative performance summaries). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to tailor data management? [Upload]

STEP 9: TEST MEASUREMENTS

GOAL: Evaluate perception and experience outcomes to measure the impact of RMC initiatives and identify emerging trends.

Required Uploads

☐	**Develop and implement a sustainability plan:** Document a formal sustainability plan that addresses equity gaps and unit-level challenges identified through stratified data analysis. Include evidence of ongoing improvement in RMC perceptions and implementation of equity-focused strategies (e.g., sustainability plan, unit-level action plans, or progress reports informed by data findings). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to test measurements? [Upload]

STEP 10: HAVE A CELEBRATION

GOAL: Celebrate perception of change and recognize the collective achievements that have strengthened the culture of respectful maternity care.

Required Uploads

Culture of appreciation: Upload documentation highlighting individual and team contributions tied to RMC, including patient or family recognition connected to respectful care practices (e.g. RMC spotlight stories, recognition communications, or testimonials). [Upload]

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to have a celebration? [Upload]

ATTESTATION

☐ **I CERTIFY THAT ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS APPLICATION IS ACCURATE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE**	
Name:	
Title:	**Date:**

RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE GOLD DESIGNATION APPLICATION

PURPOSE

The Gold Designation represents the culmination of Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) implementation, recognizing facilities that demonstrate measurable outcomes, sustained impact, and long-term transformation in culture, equity, and patient experience. This level showcases organizational excellence and continuous improvement in delivering equitable, respectful, and person-centered maternity care.

Applicants must also meet all bronze and silver criteria before submitting for gold designation.

Please ensure all patient identifiers have been redacted on any documentation submitted.

Each upload field accepts only one file. If you have multiple documents for an item, please combine them into a single file before uploading.

Date of gold application submission:

DEMONSTRATING OUTCOME IMPACT

Intent

To demonstrate measurable improvement in outcomes and sustained perception changes that reflect a mature culture of Respectful Maternity Care. Organizations at this level show evidence of impact across patient experience, clinical outcomes, and system-wide equity efforts.

STEP 1: CONFIRM COMMITMENT

GOAL: Demonstrate sustained leadership accountability and staff engagement that have resulted in measurable, sustained improvements in respectful maternity care outcomes.

Required Uploads

☐	**Staff outcomes—RMC in practice (narratives):** Upload written narratives from at least two staff members describing how integrating RMC principles has changed patient outcomes. Include case examples showing a direct link between RMC practices and improved patient experiences or outcomes.
☐	**Provider outcomes—clinical practice change:** Provide a narrative or testimonial from a provider describing how RMC has changed their clinical practice, demonstrating sustained application of RMC principles in daily care.
☐	**Unit outcomes—peer coaching and accountability:** Document how units foster safe spaces for addressing deviations and provide peer-to-peer coaching to support respectful collaboration (e.g., peer coaching logs, debrief records, or process summaries).
☐	**Unit outcomes—measurable RMC improvements:** Demonstrate evidence of improvements in RMC metrics that has been presented in leadership meetings (e.g., data trend reports, presentation slides, or meeting minutes).
☐	**Organizational outcomes—strategic integration:** Show how RMC has been institutionalized at the system level (e.g., organizational strategic plan or policy framework).
☐	**Organizational outcomes—spread beyond maternity units:** Showing measurable improvements in non-OB departments that have received RMC training, illustrating expansion of respectful care principles beyond maternity services (e.g., reports or summaries).

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to confirm commitment? [Upload]

STEP 2: ASSEMBLE TEAM

GOAL: Demonstrate measurable interdisciplinary collaboration outcomes that improve patient experience and team performance.

Required Uploads

☐	**Sustained team structure:** Upload updated documentation showing ongoing collaboration through consistent team meetings, leadership participation, and cross-disciplinary initiatives (e.g., meeting minutes documenting collaborative discussion and contributions).

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to assemble a team? [Upload]

STEP 3: RELATE READINESS

GOAL: Demonstrate that readiness assessments and action plans have led to measurable organizational improvements and increased capacity for sustaining RMC practices.

Required Uploads

☐	**Evidence of improved readiness:** Document measurable improvement in readiness since receiving Silver Designation, demonstrating strengthened staff engagement and organizational capacity (e.g., updated readiness assessment, trend analysis, or follow-up reports).
☐	**Action plan updates:** Provide an updated RMC action plan reflecting how readiness findings informed next steps, and identified priorities and strategies to maintain momentum (e.g., revised readiness goals, meeting notes, or updated timelines).

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to relate readiness? [Upload]

STEP 4: EDUCATE ALL

GOAL: Demonstrate measurable improvement in staff competence and patient satisfaction as a result of RMC education and training.

Required Uploads

☐	**Sustain commitment through ongoing reinforcement:** Show how RMC principles are reinforced in daily operations, such as staff huddles, meetings, or RMC spotlight initiatives that highlight best practices (e.g., huddle agendas, meeting minutes, or photos of spotlight boards).
☐	**Integrate annual refreshers:** Document incorporation of an annual RMC refresher within the organization's education platform (e.g., annual training curriculum, refresher completion records, or schedule of sessions).
☐	**Embed RMC into bedside practice:** Show how RMC principles are integrated into routine care (e.g., debriefings include dignity and respect reflections, hand-off reports emphasize patient dignity, huddles and staff meetings reinforce RMC values). Include debrief forms, hand-off templates, or meeting and huddle records.
☐	**Integrate RMC into simulations and training:** Upload evidence that RMC principles are woven into simulation training scenarios and debriefs (e.g., simulation outlines, debriefing notes, or SBAR tools emphasizing respectful care challenges and dignity-centered practice).

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to educate all? [Upload]

STEP 5: PROPOSE POLICY

GOAL: Demonstrate that RMC policies have resulted in measurable improvements in equity, individualized care, and clinical outcomes.

Required Uploads

☐	**Formalize doulas as part of the health care team:** Upload the dedicated doula/birth support worker policy defining the role and scope of practice, collaboration with providers, and the care planning process. Include documentation demonstrating full integration of doulas as partners in care across units (e.g., finalized policy, staff training records, patient handbook, or website excerpts).
☐	**Close the loop with bedside debrief after every birth:** Show implementation of bedside debriefs conducted after every birth that include the patient and support person(s). Debriefs should incorporate reflection on the experience, RMC principles, and follow-up if concerns are raised. Include EMR documentation, debrief forms, patient feedback, or care review records demonstrating consistent, timely debriefing practices.

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to propose policy? [Upload]

STEP 6: ADAPT CULTURE

GOAL: Demonstrate sustained culture change, evidenced by measurable improvements in staff engagement, patient experience, and equity outcomes.

Please ensure all patient identifiers have been redacted on any documentation submitted.

Required Uploads

☐	**Expand RMC culture house-wide:** Demonstrate full integration of the RMC Toolkit through awareness, promotion, and application across departments beyond maternity care. Provide evidence, such as strategy documents, cross-department examples, or communication materials, showing RMC visibility throughout the organization.
☐	**Center patient voice in governance:** Document meaningful inclusion of patient and family voices in quality assurance (QA) processes and advisory councils. Include QA meeting minutes, advisory council rosters, or agendas demonstrating how patient perspectives influence organizational decisions.
☐	**Demonstrate equity initiatives with outcomes:** Provide evidence of implemented equity-focused initiatives that include measurable outcomes and a sustainability plan. Upload data reports, program summaries, and documentation showing sustained improvements in equity and respectful care.

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to adapt culture? [Upload]

STEP 7: ASSUME ACCOUNTABILITY

GOAL: Demonstrate accountability outcomes that reflect transparency, trust, and equitable care delivery across the organization.

Required Uploads

☐	**Evidence of transparent staff accountability:** Document systems that foster psychological safety and allow staff to report disrespectful care without fear of retaliation. Provide evidence such as survey results, focus group feedback, or testimonials showing staff comfort in speaking up and shared accountability for respectful care.
☐	**Evidence of patient and family co-design:** Document meaningful involvement of patient and family advisors in decision-making and improvement efforts. Provide materials such as meeting minutes, attendance lists, or examples showing how their input shaped system-level changes.
☐	**Evidence of captured patient perspectives:** Document use of focus groups, interviews, or feedback methods to identify respectful care practices and areas for improvement. Provide summaries, transcripts, or quality improvement records showing how patient input informs ongoing accountability and improvement.

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to assume accountability? [Upload]

STEP 8: TAILOR DATA MANAGEMENT

GOAL: Demonstrate measurable use of data to track and improve outcomes related to respectful, equitable maternity care.

Required Uploads

☐	**Collect and report clinical outcomes linked to RMC:** Document a process for the regular collection and reporting of outcomes related to RMC implementation. Include clinical dashboards or reports demonstrating sustained improvement (for at least 3 months) in outcomes associated with RMC practices.
☐	**Collect and report differences in outcomes related to birth outcomes**: Document monitoring and reporting of differences in outcomes (e.g., breastfeeding rates, birth trauma) to identify and address equity gaps. Include clinical dashboards, stratified outcome data, or equity reports demonstrating measurable reduction in differences in outcomes linked to RMC implementation.
☐	**Benchmark performance:** Upload benchmarking reports comparing your organization's RMC-related clinical outcomes with peer organizations. Include documentation identifying next areas of focus for improvement and evidence of continuous advancement supported by external benchmarking.

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to tailor data management? [Upload]

STEP 9: TEST MEASUREMENTS

GOAL: Demonstrate measurable improvements and sustained impact of tested RMC interventions through continuous evaluation and learning.

Required Uploads

☐	**Improve and sustain culture linked to RMC:** Show how leader rounding is conducted to validate improvements in organizational culture related to RMC. Include leader rounding reports, staff or patient feedback summaries, and any evidence showing demonstrated and sustained cultural improvements.
☐	**Improve clinical outcomes linked to RMC:** Document a structured quality improvement plan developed and implemented using a validated methodology (e.g., Plan-Do-Study-Act [PDSA], A3). Include the quality improvement plan, associated outcome data reports, and analysis showing measurable improvements in clinical outcomes aligned with RMC goals.
☐	**Reduce differences in outcomes linked to RMC:** Document a structured quality improvement plan (e.g., PDSA, A3), implemented to reduce differences in outcomes across stratified patient populations. Include sustainability plans and unit-level action plans informed by stratified data analysis showing reductions in inequities.

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to test measurements? [Upload]

STEP 10: HAVE A CELEBRATION

GOAL: Demonstrate recognition of measurable outcomes and shared celebration of RMC success across all levels of the organization.

Required Uploads

☐	**Embed recognition into culture:** Document a formal, sustained recognition program that celebrates RMC achievements internally and externally (e.g., awards, newsletters, or recognition events). Include recognition program criteria, annual reports or dashboards with outcomes, and examples of external acknowledgment, such as awards, media coverage, or patient stories.
☐	**Increase awareness and adoption of RMC by sharing outcomes:** Show how your organization has shared RMC outcomes or strategies publicly to promote awareness and adoption (e.g., poster presentation, published article, or professional conference participation). Include proof of dissemination, such as accepted posters, published articles, or documentation of strategy-sharing at the organizational, community, or professional level.

OPTIONAL: Is there other information not captured that you would like to share regarding what your organization has done to have a celebration? [Upload]

ATTESTATION

☐	**I CERTIFY THAT ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS APPLICATION IS ACCURATE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE**

Name:	
Title:	**Date:**

REFERENCES

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