CHECKLIST 2: Assessment and Counseling Before PrEP Initiation

- ✓ Assess the patient's health literacy and ensure that the purpose, benefits, and risks of PrEP are understood.
- ✓ Individualize the decision of which medication to initiate for PrEP by weighing the benefit of reducing the patient's risk of acquiring HIV against the potential adverse effects of the medication as well as the patient's preferences.
- ✓ Make clear that PrEP efficacy is highly dependent on adherence, assess for readiness and willingness to adhere to PrEP and recommended follow-up care, and assess for barriers to adherence.
- ✓ Assess interest in and eligibility for injectable PrEP, including the ability to adhere to visits every 2 months for intramuscular injections or every 6 months for subcutaneous injections.
- ✓ Assess for relative contraindications for injectable PrEP, including the presence of gluteal fillers for intramuscular injections and for significant medication interactions with SC LEN.
- ✓ Obtain thorough sexual and drug use histories, identify current risk-taking behaviors, and encourage safer sex practices in addition to PrEP and safer drug injection techniques, if applicable.
- ✓ Ask whether the patient has a sex partner (or partners) with known HIV; if yes, ask if the partner's viral load status is known.
- ✓ Discuss with patients in HIV-serodifferent partnerships the benefits and risks of relying on their partner's undetectable viral load achieved with ART versus adding PrEP to prevent sexual transmission of HIV.
- ✓ Counsel HIV-serodifferent couples who are considering using PrEP during attempts to conceive about the utility, safety, and possible risks of the medication and other approaches to safer conception.
- ✓ Perform a psychosocial assessment and refer for appropriate social and psychological support services, as indicated, to minimize HIV risk and support maintenance in care.
- ✓ Partner with other care providers as needed to provide services that may include mental health and substance use treatment, case management, navigation and linkage services, housing assistance, and income/benefits assessments.

Resources:

- Tufts Medicine Health Literacy Tool Shed (funded by the National Library of Medicine)
- AHRQ Short Assessment of Health Literacy–Spanish and English
- AHRQ Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine–Short Form
- AHRQ Short Assessment of Health Literacy for Spanish Adults
- NYSDOH AI GOALS Framework for Sexual History Taking in Primary Care and Substance Use Harm Reduction in Medical Care
- NYSDOH Expanded Syringe Access Program (ESAP): Overview of the Law and Regulations and Directory of New York State Syringe Exchange Programs)

Abbreviations: AHRQ, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; ART, antiretroviral therapy; PrEP, pre-exposure prophylaxis; SC LEN, subcutaneous lenacapavir.