

ACNM DOA Annual Report 2005

ACNM Division of Accreditation

The Division of Accreditation (DOA) consists of four units:

- **Governing Board** is responsible for the administration of the DOA's activities, formulation of policy, and the development of the criteria used by the BOR in determining accreditation status.
- **Site Visitor Panel** arranges, conducts, and evaluates accreditation visits to midwifery education programs or institutions.
- **Board of Review** (BOR) is responsible for review of an applicant's Preaccreditation Report or Self-Evaluation Report and the Site Visit Report, and for determination of accreditation status.
- **Advisory Committee**, composed of members representing nursing, medicine, education and the public, as well as the immediate past chair of the DOA, advises in the development of policy and evaluation of the DOA.

In order to be recognized as an accrediting agency by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), the DOA must be independent of the professional organization, ACNM. Although the DOA shares space and facilities at the ACNM national office, it pays ACNM for its use of the national office and for 50 percent staff time. Income for the DOA budget comes almost exclusively from fees paid by programs and institutions that it accredits. There is also a mechanism whereby donations can be made to the DOA through the A.C.N.M. Foundation, Inc. Every five years, all accrediting agencies that are recognized by the USDE must go through a process of petitioning for continued recognition. Preparation of this petition and necessary accompanying documentation consumed a great deal of time and effort in 2005. In addition to requesting continued recognition as a programmatic accrediting agency, the DOA is petitioning for an expansion of scope to include institutions of midwifery education that may offer other health-related programs such as nurse practitioner. If the DOA achieves this recognition, it would become a Title IV gatekeeper for federal funding for institutions that it accredits.

The DOA conducted five site visits during 2005, and the BOR made accreditation decisions about eight programs and one institution.

Other activities included revision of the *Criteria for Institutional Accreditation* and several revisions to the *Policies and Procedures Manual*. The most significant of these is a change in policy to require active solicitation, by the DOA and by programs and institutions undergoing evaluation, of public comment into the accreditation process. All DOA documents are now available for free download on the ACNM Web site.

DOA representatives also participated in the ACNM Education Summit, the Alliance for Nursing Accreditation, and the DNP Invitational Stakeholders Meeting held by AACN.