



NEWS RELEASE

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ACNM APPLAUDS CMMI FOR *STRONG START* FUNDING OF ALTERNATIVE MODELS OF PRENATAL CARE

Silver Spring, MD – The [American College of Nurse-Midwives](http://www.acnm.org) (ACNM) applauds the leadership of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) in announcing *Strong Start*—a new national campaign aimed at reducing preterm birth and offering more than \$40 million in grant funding to test alternative models of prenatal care.

The initiative was announced on Wednesday by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius at the Family Health and Birth Center in Washington, D.C. Founded by certified nurse-midwife Ruth W. Lubic, CNM, EdD, the birth center has reduced preterm birth and improved maternal and newborn outcomes in medically underserved areas of Washington, D.C.

Strong Start will meet its goals by scaling up efforts to implement strategies already shown to reduce preterm birth, most notably avoiding early elective induction before 39 weeks. It will also fund investigation of innovative models of prenatal care—specifically birth centers, group prenatal care, and maternity care homes—that hold promise for addressing the physical, emotional, and psychosocial factors behind preterm birth.

“We are pleased that CMMI is focusing a national spotlight on maternal and newborn health and the ways care and outcomes can be improved. These new resources will enable midwives and other maternity care providers to implement strategies that reduce preterm birth on a broader scale,” said ACNM President Holly Powell Kennedy, CNM, PhD. “ACNM will play an active role in the public awareness campaign, and we encourage members to apply for funding.”

ACNM members — certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) — are well-positioned to play an active role in this initiative. Nationally, CNMs and CMs attend more than 300,000 births every year in hospitals, birth centers, and homes with proven safety and excellent outcomes.

“Research supports the use of midwife-led care models during pregnancy, including birth centers and group prenatal care. We look forward to working on this agenda in future public-private partnerships,” said Kennedy.

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The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) is the professional association that represents certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) in the United States. ACNM promotes excellence in midwifery education, clinical practice, and research. With roots dating to 1929, our members are primary care providers for women throughout the lifespan, with a special emphasis on pregnancy, childbirth, and

gynecologic and reproductive health. ACNM provides research, administers and promotes continuing education programs, establishes clinical practice standards, and creates liaisons with state and federal agencies and members of Congress to increase the visibility and recognition of midwifery care.

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