**Fast Facts about Midwives**

* Midwifery is legal in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, and Guam.
* The vast majority of US midwives—more than 12,000—are certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs).1
* CNMs/CMs attend more than 300,000 births annually, and provide primary care services, including annual exams, writing prescriptions, patient education, and reproductive health services.2,3
* More than 50% of CNMs/CMs list physician practices or hospitals/medical centers as their principal employers. 4 Of CNM/CM-attended births, 95.7% occur in hospitals, 2.2% occur in freestanding birth centers, and 2% occur in homes.2

**Midwives Provide High Quality Care**

Women cared for by midwives compared to women of the same risk status cared for by physicians have: 5,6

* Higher chance for a normal vaginal birth
* Lower rates of cesarean section
* Reduced rates of labor induction and augmentation
* Significant reduction in incidence of third and fourth degree perineal tears
* Higher rates of breastfeeding
* Lowered risk of neonatal mortality, low birth weight, and infant mortality
* Less use of epidural anesthesia
* Shorter length of stay in the birth facility

**Midwives Provide Cost Effective Care**

* Midwifery care results in fewer cesarean births than physician care for equally low-risk women.2 The average costs for vaginal birth are approximately 50% lower than those for cesarean birth.7
* During pregnancy, 9% fewer women in collaborative care than in physician only care make costly visits to the Emergency Room.8
* Each day in the hospital is a significant cost. Of women cared for by midwives and physicians working collaboratively, 28% are discharged before 24 hours.8
* Compared to women cared for exclusively by physicians, 6% fewer women cared for by midwives and physicians collaboratively have stays longer than 72 hours.8

**Midwives are a Solution to the Health Care Workforce Shortage**

“Ob-gyns working collaboratively with midwives is a way to address the gap between the supply of ob-gyns and the demand for women’s health care services.”  
-Richard N. Waldman, MD, FACOG, Past President, American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists9

“The US population is growing, yet the number of new medical graduates has basically plateaued—hiring nonphysician clinicians is a good solution to accommodate the health care needs of the growing population.”  
-The Obstetrician-Gynecologist Workforce in the United States 201110

“CNMs should be better utilized to address the projected health care workforce shortages.”  
-*Women’s Health Issues*, January 201211

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