

Student Report 2015

This report is submitted on behalf of liaisons from midwifery schools across the country. We have polled our peers on topics that are pertinent to them right now and are presenting the synopsis of that data in this 2015 Student Report.

Inconsistent Student Training

Overall, we see that our schools are meeting core competencies for accreditation, but we would like to see more specificities in these competencies so that our midwifery training equips us more uniformly for this profession.

Students report that some feel poorly equipped to manage specific clinical scenarios even though they are outlined in the core competencies. ACNM could have evidence-based podcasts to provide an opportunity for preceptors to be up-to-date on the latest evidence.

Programs should be more innovative in their ability to recognize various levels of experience. We understand that some programs offer credit, but we would like to see more consistency in this among schools.

We recommend that all CNM programs require a full primary care practice course and clinical. We understand that this has been an issue in the past, but it is still a complaint of students. We want to come out of school prepared to be primary care providers.

Some programs offer no training or education on early pregnancy loss or termination provision. We would propose the provision of a clinical experience for these issues for any students who desire such.

Students report that there are broad inconsistencies between many distance versus face-to-face taught CNM programs. We propose work toward more integration in these programs.

LGBTQIA* issues not taught in many programs, such as female-to-male transitioning, aging, sexual identity, gender expression, need to be added to the curricula for every student training.

Diversification and Inclusion

We are pleased to see the incredible efforts and progress being made by the Diversification and Inclusion Taskforce over the past year, culminating in the recently published report, "Shifting the Frame." We are hopeful that the ACNM 2015-2020 Strategic Plan will take bold steps forward to address the on-going challenges and opportunities within the organization around diversification and inclusion.

The 2014 Student Report made several concrete requests regarding

- More stratified data collection to understand issues of under-representation of various populations within ACNM
- Evidence-based recruitment and retention of midwifery students of color
- Promotion of midwifery in underserved communities
- Concerted efforts to develop a mandated comprehensive midwifery-focused diversity curriculum,
- Cultivation and support of leadership roles in ACNM among midwives of color, and
- Outreach to other allied organizations serving diverse populations to increase awareness of midwifery care

We still view these as key priorities that will continue to need to be addressed long-term by ACNM. As the D/I Taskforce continues its work, we hope to hear more specific details about how the requests from the 2014 Student Report are being addressed.

With the intention of continuing to build on the foundation and momentum from last year's Student Report, we respectfully request that the ACNM Board of Directors

- Offer more frequent communication updates and increased transparency from the D/I Taskforce to membership and students throughout the process of strategic planning and implementation,
- Actively support Regional Reps and Affiliate leaders to be involved in creation of clear pathways to connect students with D/I efforts of ACNM

Student Membership

Our overall goal is to increase student membership. The students present have experienced the benefits of being members of ACNM and want to make membership more accessible to our peers so that they, too, can benefit and together we can begin to start working toward the College's future.

We appreciate the previous reductions in student membership rates that have been made. However, with the continued rise in cost of tuition, the cost of membership is prohibitive to many students, even with the current reductions in membership fees. We recommend that the College consider further reducing conference and membership fees for students. In addition, we recommend creating a formal monetary sponsorship to offer members the opportunity to sponsor student membership and/ or conference attendance at time of renewal of their membership. Additionally, further advertisement of ACNM as an organization and membership within it, as well as communication of membership benefits and the importance of student membership is needed. Formal educational materials about membership from the college would allow educational programs and affiliates to increase the membership through informing students of ACNM benefits.

Further, students expressed that connections between local affiliates and their leaders increase their interest in ACNM membership. Champion local affiliates hosted potlucks and gatherings for students, guest lectures, and mock business meetings, which have all been met with positivity

from students and encouraged them to join ACNM. We request that all local affiliates have a student representative on their board to facilitate this connection with the local student body. This relationship benefits both groups, as students provide volunteer support for their affiliates and innovative skills and ideas.

Students present mentioned how meaningful it was when affiliates reached out to them, helped them feel included. For example:

- Oregon affiliate hosts a new student welcome meeting annually, helping students feel connected to the affiliate and welcomed into the profession
- Michigan affiliate provides scholarships for annual meeting attendance to students present at annual affiliate retreat, which encourages both local and national involvement
- Massachusetts affiliate hosts a professional issues day which includes a mock business meeting. Region I rep, Anne Gibeau, & Massachusetts affiliate leader Kathryn Kravetz Carr.

Finally, we request that ACNM and the ACNM Foundation advertise scholarship opportunities in one centralized location on the website along with advanced notice of deadlines.

Preceptors

As students we are extremely grateful and inspired to be here at the 60th Annual Meeting. We would like to thank all the ACNM members who have regular involvement precepting midwifery students. Your continued mentorship allows student midwives to grow into successful nurse-midwives. The primary issue that we would like to address is the lack of access to preceptors. This challenge leads to stress during our education, a lack of variety in clinical experiences and a potential delay in graduation. The availability of more preceptors would enhance the future of nurse-midwifery.

Therefore, the Student and New Midwives Section respectfully requests:

- The development of an electronic database at the regional level of members willing to precept midwifery students.
- We request that the board of the ACNM continue to encourage their members to precept new students
- We suggest that all preceptors are ACNM members. This could be encouraged by offering CEUs, in the form of webinars or podcasts, or access to Up-To-Date through the student's university library.
- We request that each state has an affiliate level representative for students. We suggest that their role include student advocacy, preceptor recruitment/evaluation and maintaining the regional database.
- We request that the board maintain their presence at the national level regarding discussions for graduate nursing education funding.

We all may be at different places in this journey, but we call on you to share your wisdom and mentorship to grow the future of our profession.

Employment Opportunities

We would like to thank the college for all it has done to help us transition from students to working midwives as we find and succeed in our first job. We are incredibly grateful for the in-depth resources that have been developed and made available on the ACNM student and new careers webpage such as the "Knowing Your Practice Environment" document. While many of us utilize these resources, there are many others that are unaware of their existence. We would like to suggest that the college further increase advertisement of them. As well, we are excited about future resources the college may produce and would like to request a report of up to date salary information for new graduates.

We are aware of the budget constraints of ACNM and the need to charge employers to post a midwifery job opening to offset some of ACNM expenses, but we feel this can be a potential barrier to obtaining excellent job opportunities and are concerned that a fee for posting a job could be cost-prohibitive and deter practices from posting jobs there in favor of other websites where postings are free.

Finally, thank you for your attention and thought to the possibility of a residency program for nurse-midwifery. In lieu of the implausibility of a residency program at this time, we would like to propose an organized mentorship program by which the college can match seasoned midwives, for example, fellows, with newly graduated midwives. We as students recognize that the fellows have an incredible amount of wisdom and experience, and believe we could benefit greatly from their mentorship as we embark on our careers. As well, this mentorship may help alleviate some of the burden that midwifery practices and other healthcare facilities around the nation may feel when faced with hiring and mentoring a new graduate. In addition, it can also indirectly help to increase the amount of practices hiring new graduates and decrease our concerns as students in our chances of obtaining a job upon completion of our midwifery program.

Conclusion

We are midwifery students for such a short time. In truth, we are really your future ACNM board, Taskforce members, educators, preceptors, service directors, and regional representatives...we are the future midwives of ACNM. As such, we are eager to be more actively involved in developing the strategies that will help move ACNM in a direction that reflects the diversity of the communities and families that we serve. We are committed to carrying out ACNM's vision of a midwife for every woman.