QuickInfo

AMERICAN COLLEGE of NURSE-MIDWIVES
With women, for a lifetime®

Birth Centers

It has been well over 20 years since two midwifery leaders first described the childbearing center as an alternative to conventional care (1,2). Over 10 years ago, the landmark National Birth Center Study was published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, providing clear evidence that the birth center is a safe and satisfying alternative to hospital confinement for healthy women (3). Birth centers managed by midwives have improved access to care (4) and some hospital-based birth centers have served a large number of women (5). The birth center is recognized today as a health care innovation that has changed policy in maternity care delivery worldwide (6).

The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) strongly supports the development of quality birth centers and many birth centers are owned and staffed by midwives. However, most of the inquiries received at ACNM regarding birth centers are best directed to the organization that was founded to promote the birth center concept, the American Association of Birth Centers.

American Association of Birth Centers (AABC)
The American Association of Birth Centers (AABC), formerly known as the National Association of Childbearing Centers (NACC), is the nation's most comprehensive resource on birth centers. AABC has built a solid foundation for growth in birth centers through promotion of state regulations; reimbursement; a quality improvement program; national standards; recognized accreditation by the Commission for the Accreditation of Birth Centers; an annual forum for discussion of issues; education of parents, professionals, and policy-makers to the birth center concept; major research efforts; and development of industry indicators. Visit their web site, www.BirthCenters.org, or contact them at:

3123 Gottschall Road
Perkiomenville, PA 18074
Phone: (215) 234-8068
Fax: (215) 234-8829

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The ACNM "QuickInfo" series was developed by the Department of Professional Services to respond to common inquiries, summarizing ACNM resources regarding a particular topic, as well as listing selected literature and a variety of other resources. Your feedback is welcomed; contact Professional Services at (240) 485-1800 or info@acnm.org.

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