

Caring for Men

“Is it within the scope of practice for a midwife to care for men?”

This *QuickInfo* lists ACNM documents that provide an essential foundation for answering this question and provides additional resources that will be useful to midwives and others concerned with midwifery care to men. Generally speaking, the midwifery scope of practice is limited to the independent management of women’s health care and the care of newborns. However, the *Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice* provide for midwives to care for male partners in the context of screening, evaluation, and treatment of sexually transmitted illnesses. Some midwives have completed dual training and obtained certification as adult or family nurse practitioners and may care for men within the scope of practice of those disciplines.

What determines scope of practice?

Two essential ACNM documents provide the foundation for defining the CNM/CM’s scope of practice: **1) *Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice***, and **2) *Standards for the Practice of Midwifery***. State laws and regulations also play a role in determining scope of practice. The relatively specific list of clinical diagnoses cared for or procedures performed that most people are looking for when asking questions about scope of practice is contained in the clinical practice guidelines of the individual midwife or midwifery practice. Therefore, *it is the clinical practice guidelines that define the individual midwife’s scope of practice, based on the particular profile and skills of that midwife, those of her collaborating physician colleague(s), and the site and client population characteristics.*

The Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice

This document delineates the fundamental knowledge, skills, and behaviors expected of a new practitioner. The focus, as highlighted in the title, is *basic* midwifery practice. With respect to the care of men, Section V. of the Core Competencies, Components of Midwifery Care, subheading A. 3. f. specifically includes:

- f. Management strategies and therapeutics for sexually transmitted infections that includes indicated partner evaluation, treatment, or referral

The Core Competencies are available on the ACNM web site www.midwife.org.

Standards for the Practice of Midwifery

The *Standards for the Practice of Midwifery* (ACNM, 2003) mandate the development of practice guidelines. Specifically, Standard V states that “midwifery care is based upon knowledge, skills, and judgments which are reflected in written practice guidelines.” Realizing that practice would evolve and that individual and institutional differences would influence decisions regarding expanding practice beyond the Core Competencies, ACNM developed *Guidelines for the Incorporation of New Procedures into Midwifery Practice* in the early 1970s. These guidelines were incorporated into the *Standards* (as Standard VIII) in 2003. They provide a mechanism for evaluating the need for a particular procedure, establishing a process for education, and evaluating and maintaining competency. The Standards are available on the ACNM web site at: http://www.midwife.org/standard_setting.cfm?CFID=1447799&CFTOKEN=94427149.

Legal Guidelines

The *Standards for the Practice of Midwifery* direct the midwife to consider relevant statutes and regulations that might constrain the midwife from incorporation of a particular procedure. It is important to check the laws and regulations in the state where you practice to be certain that there is no language prohibiting CNMs/CMs from caring for male clients. State laws and regulations that may define the scope of practice of a midwife, when

they exist, are addressed in two ACNM publications available from the ACNM Resource Catalog*: *Nurse-Midwifery Today: A Handbook of State Laws and Regulations* (2005), and *Direct Entry Midwifery: A Summary of State Laws and Regulations* (2002). Some state laws explicitly reference the ACNM Standards thereby permitting advanced practice procedures consistent with the guidelines. In addition, Table 11 of the *Nurse-Midwifery Today: Summary State Tables* lists those states that specifically designate CNMs as primary care providers. Access to this document is available to ACNM members only on the ACNM State Legislative Page at http://www.midwife.org/state_legislation.cfm.

Payment Issues

Midwives who perform advanced procedures that are consistent with their state-defined scope of practice should be paid for those services (if they are covered) under all federal health programs and most private health plans. Many state insurance laws mandate payment for services provided by a midwife if they would be covered by a health plan when provided by a physician. For more information on federal and state laws governing payment issues, midwives and third party payers should consult the ACNM publications, *Getting Paid: Billing, Coding and Payment for Midwifery Services* (2006) and the Handbook on State Laws and Regulations referenced above. Visit ShopACNM to purchase the latest edition of *Getting Paid*: <http://acnm.stores.yahoo.net/getpaidbilco.html>.

Training Programs

Laboratory diagnostic tests and treatment regimens for STIs are consistent for male and female clients. However, STI screening typically includes a clinical exam. Not all midwifery education curricula include training in the male clinical exam. Frequently, ACNM members call the national office seeking resources for training to develop this competency when they work in sites where they screen and treat male partners. The following resources have been compiled to help midwives find such clinical training opportunities.

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Network of STD/HIV Prevention Training Centers.** The NNPTC are CDC-funded regional training centers created in partnership with health departments and universities whose purpose is to increase the skills and knowledge of health professionals in the areas of sexual and reproductive health. Information about the 10 regional sites offering training in the STD clinical exam is available at: http://depts.washington.edu/nnptc/regional_centers/index.html. This training program “Clinical Approach to the STD Patient” includes a module on the “STD Male Clinical Exam”. The curriculum is available for download at: http://depts.washington.edu/nnptc/core_training/clinical/PDF/ClinicalApproach2004.pdf
- **Title X of the Public Health Service Act, administered within the Office of Population Affairs (OPA) by the Office of Family Planning (OFP), funded through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).** The Title X program is the only Federal program devoted solely to the provision of family planning and reproductive health care. As one of its activities, the Title X program supports training for family planning clinic personnel through general training programs. Information about these training program sites is available at: <http://opa.osophs.dhhs.gov/titlex/ofp-training-grantees-listing.html> In addition, the Family Planning Male Training Center webpage is a site specifically devoted to providing resources and a communication center to support Title X Family Planning providers in their delivery of services to male clients: <http://www.fpmtc.org/index.html>

1/12/07; Revised 6/18/08

* The ACNM Resource Catalog is available from the ACNM Web site. You may also contact us at the phone number or e-mail address below and request that a Catalog be mailed to you.

The “*QuickInfo*” series was developed by the Dept. of Professional Services to respond to common inquiries, summarizing ACNM resources regarding a particular topic, as well as listing selected literature and other resources. Feedback is welcomed; contact Professional Services at 240-485-1800 or info@acnm.org