

Data Collection

This document was designed to assist certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) with the important job of data collection in their practice.

The Nurse-Midwifery Clinical Data Set

The creation of a Nurse-Midwifery Clinical Data Set was one of the first projects of the Division of Research (DOR) when it was established in 1990. The development, pilot testing, and evaluation of a uniform data collection instrument called the Nurse-Midwifery Clinical Data Set (NMCDS) was carried out by Deborah Greener, CNM, under the auspices of the ACNM DOR.(1)

The lengthy NMCDS was found to be cumbersome for routine use in busy clinical practices. A shortened version has been used to collect data from multiple practices and link specific care measures unique to midwifery practice with maternal health outcomes.(2,3)

The ACNM Data Set Series

As a result of this experience, the DOR moved to develop 5 one-page data sets pertaining to antepartum care, intrapartum care, postpartum care, newborn care and primary health care to women. The first two completed, the ACNM Data Sets – Intrapartum Care and Antepartum Care, are available from ACNM's Web site at <http://www.midwife.org/publications.cfm>.

Gravidata

Gravidata was a software package based on NMCDS that was developed by the ACNM DOR. Due to the rapid expansion of the software market with many programs available for data collection and analysis, ACNM ended sales in 1995 (*Quickening* Mar/Apr 1995 p. 1,17). The decision was made to allow the DOR to concentrate energies on the development of more usable data sets, as described above, and to assist the membership in developing effective mechanisms for data collection and analysis.

If you have data stored in Gravidata, this information can be easily read by a variety spreadsheet and statistical software packages. Please refer to your Gravidata Users Manual.

Software Programs

EpiInfo is a series of programs for word processing, data management and epidemiologic analysis, designed for public health professionals. Developed by the Epidemiology Program Office at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, EpiInfo can be downloaded (free of charge) from the CDC Web site at www.cdc.gov/epo/epiinfo.htm. EpiInfo is very easy to use and offers programming languages for both data input and analysis.

Other commercially available programs may serve your needs. In purchasing software, consider your needs regarding data collection and statistical analysis. For data collection, programs such as MS Excel and Lotus will work well for relatively small datasets. Programs such as SPSS can be used for statistical analysis. Also, if you are affiliated with a hospital,

you may wish to speak with staff in the hospital's systems information department. They may have developed software you can use, or they may be willing to assist you.

Birth Centers

If you practice in a birth center, you are probably aware of the Uniform Data Set developed by the American Association of Birth Centers (AABC). You may get more information by contacting AABC toll free at 866-542-4784, or www.birthcenters.org.

Birth Certificate Data

Keep in mind that on a state and national level, the birth certificate serves as an important source of data regarding midwife-attended births. A recent study published in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* and the positive press coverage that followed is an example of the value of birth certificate data to describe the effectiveness of midwifery care.(4)

If you have further questions regarding data collection, you may contact the Division of Research Midwifery Data Section. Contact information for the current section chair may be found in the Division and Committee listings in the ACNM Membership Directory and on the Web site.

References

1. Greener D. Development and validation of the nurse-midwifery clinical data set. *J Nurse Midwifery* 1991; 36:174-183.
2. Albers LL, Anderson D, Cragin L, Daniels SM, Hunter C, Sedler KD, et al. Factors related to perineal trauma in childbirth. *J Nurse Midwifery* 1996; 41:269-276
3. The CNM Data Group 1. Midwifery management of pain and labor. *J Nurse Midwifery* 1998; 43:77-82.
4. MacDorman MF, Singh GK. Midwifery care, social and medical risk factors, and birth outcomes in the USA. *J Epidemiol Community Health* 1998; 52:310-317

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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.