

**INFORMATION  
FOR  
FOREIGN EDUCATED  
MIDWIVES & NURSE-MIDWIVES**



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

**WHO SEEK TO PRACTICE IN  
THE UNITED STATES**

**American College of Nurse-Midwives  
March 2009**

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## ***INTRODUCTION***

The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) welcomes your interest in the profession of midwifery in the United States (U.S.). We acknowledge the contributions that foreign-educated nurse-midwives (FENMs) and foreign educated midwives (FEMs) have made to the health of women and babies around the world. Today, as in the past, FENMs/FEMs who become certified and join ACNM enrich the profession of midwifery with their diversity.

We are glad that you are here and that you have asked about practicing as a midwife in the U.S. Every country has some differences in the way midwifery is practiced, and for most FENMs/FEMs, there will be a transition period. It is our hope that you will practice as a certified nurse-midwife (CNM) or a certified midwife (CM) in the U.S. This information is developed as a starting point to help you reach your professional goals.

This information focuses on the path to gain credentials as a CNM or CM. We have tried to present this information as simply as possible. It is, however, a complicated issue! It is particularly difficult because the CM credential is still very new in the U.S. While CNMs are recognized in all 50 states, predicting what the practice opportunities will be for CMs in some states is difficult. If you are confused the first time you read this, please be aware that there is still some confusion among midwives born and educated here!

This information booklet begins with a brief history of midwifery in the U.S. and a description of midwifery practice in the U.S. Next there are definitions of the various midwifery credentials in the U.S. and information about licensure. The various educational routes are described and then a step by step process that should help you decide what is best for you. Finally, there is information about ACNM and the American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB) formerly known as the ACNM Certification Council, Inc. (ACC), some important resources, and frequently asked questions.

### ***A HISTORY OF MIDWIFERY IN THE U.S.***

Though midwives have been attending births in the U.S. since colonial times, midwifery in this country developed along two separate pathways. The first American midwives were immigrants who were formally trained in their native countries. During the 1920s, a combination of the nursing and midwifery professional, modeled after nurse-midwives practicing in the United Kingdom, led to the formation of the first nurse-midwifery practice in the U.S., the Frontier Nursing Service (FNS). FNS was founded in 1925, in a remote and rural area of eastern Kentucky by Mary Breckinridge, the first U.S. nurse to become a nurse-midwife. After graduating from an educational program in England and practicing in Scotland, she developed a system of district clinics based on what she had seen in the Scottish Outer Hebrides. The practice, which provided maternal and infant health care, demonstrated the effectiveness of the nurse in an expanded role as midwife 40 years before the concept was widely recognized in this country.

Another British educated nurse-midwife, Rose McNaught, became the first nurse-midwifery

instructor in the U.S. She began her career working with Mary Breckinridge at the FNS. In 1932 she helped start the first U.S. nurse-midwifery school at the Maternity Center Association Lobenstine Clinic in New York City. The curriculum was based on the British model but was modified to reflect the "cultural patterns and health care systems in the United States." In 1939, Mary Breckinridge founded a second nurse-midwifery educational program at FNS.

The need for nurse-midwifery services in this country increased slowly until the 1970s when there was a growing demand by childbearing families in the U.S. for a more natural approach to childbirth, along with more emphasis on personalized care. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the number of nurse-midwifery practices and educational programs grew steadily. The 1990s brought such a strong demand for nurse-midwifery services that today there are not enough certified nurse-midwives to meet the demand. Since 1991, the number of midwife-attended births has nearly doubled. In 2008, there were approximately 11,320 CNMs and CMs in practice in the U.S.

Although nursing has been the primary route of entry for most midwives in the U.S., state laws and regulations governing midwifery practice are evolving and it is now possible to practice midwifery in the U.S. without being a nurse. ACNM recently set standards for education and practice for individuals who want to become a midwife without becoming a nurse. Individuals who meet these standards are practicing as certified midwives (CMs). As of 2009, there were more than 70 certified midwives in the U.S.

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### ***MIDWIFERY PRACTICE TODAY IN THE U.S.***

It is important to understand how education, credentials and licensure impact your ability to practice as a midwife in the U.S.

- ▶ *Education:* The ACNM Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME) is the recognized accrediting agency for nurse-midwifery and midwifery education programs across the U.S.
- ▶ *Credentials:* The American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB), formerly known as the ACNM Certification Council (ACC), is a separate organization that establishes the requirements and administers the exam for individuals to receive the credentials of either a CNM or CM, depending on whether or not you are a registered nurse (RN) in the U.S. These credentials are defined on the next page.
- ▶ *Licensure:* **Each state in the U.S. establishes its own licensing requirements** that enable midwives to practice in that state. The credential CNM is recognized in all states and territories of the U.S. Currently, the credential CM is only recognized in 3 states: New York, New Jersey, and Rhode Island. This is in part due to the relative newness of the credential. In addition, there are other credentials or categories of midwife that are recognized in various states.

***Scope of Practice: What do midwives do?***

As in other countries, midwives in the U.S. provide routine prenatal care, labor and delivery management and support, and postpartum care. In addition, CNMs/CMs provide family planning counseling and gynecological services including: yearly physical exams, breast exams, pap smears, family planning services, preventive health screening, and health education. In most states, CNMs/CMs also have prescriptive privileges.

CNMs/CMs in the U.S. function as primary health care providers for the women and newborns they serve. If no problems arise, these clients may never see a physician; however, all CNMs/CMs must have an agreement with a physician to provide consultation and accept referrals as needed.

The scope of practice for midwives who are not certified by AMCB is frequently more limited than it is for CNMs and CMs.

***Practice site: Where do midwives practice?***

CNMs and CMs provide care in hospitals, clinics, free standing birth centers, private practices, and homes. Some are employees of institutions or physicians, and some own their practices.

Determining which midwifery credential is best for you will depend in part upon 1) the education and credentials that you received in another country and 2) what your professional goals are for your practice in the U.S.

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## ***CREDENTIALS***

### ***Certified nurse-midwife (CNM)***

A certified nurse-midwife (CNM) is an individual educated in the two disciplines of nursing and midwifery, and possesses evidence of certification according to the requirements of ACNM. State requirements for nurse-midwifery must also be met, such as degree requirements. CNMs are registered nurses with a baccalaureate degree who have completed an ACNM accredited educational program in nurse-midwifery or equivalent. Graduates of nurse-midwifery education programs must pass a national board exam administered by the American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB) before entering into practice.

### ***Certified midwife (CM)***

A certified midwife (CM) is an individual educated in the discipline of midwifery, who possesses evidence of certification according to the requirements of ACNM. State requirements for midwifery practice must also be met. CMs have an education background in health, a baccalaureate degree and they have completed an ACNM Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME) accredited educational program in midwifery or its equivalent. Graduates of midwifery education programs must pass a national board exam administered by AMCB before entering into practice.

CMs are different from “lay,” “direct entry” or “professional midwives” in that they have graduated from an ACNM ACME accredited education program, have met the same Core Competencies and have passed the same certification examination as CNMs. However, state regulation and licensure of CMs has just begun. Currently, the state of New York is the only state where CNM and CM licensure are essentially equal. In other states and territories, CMs may be regulated in the same way as “lay” midwives or other midwives, or it may be unclear how CMs will be regulated until one applies for a license.

***Please note: In the United States, the minimum educational requirement for becoming a CNM or a CM is a baccalaureate degree. If you have not already earned a baccalaureate degree or its equivalent, this should be your first step.***

### ***Other Midwifery Credentials***

Midwives who are not registered nurses and/or who are not graduates of ACNM ACME accredited programs or equivalent are sometimes called “direct entry,” “lay,” “licensed,” or “professional” midwives. Their practices are usually centered on providing home birth or birth center options for women. The scope of practice for these midwives is frequently more limited than for CNM/CMs.

**The legal status of these non-nurse midwives varies from state to state and can be very confusing.** Several states require midwives to have an RN credential in order to legally practice. At least 20 states regulate midwifery as a profession and do not require midwives to be registered nurses (RN). In 12 states, midwifery practice by non-nurses is *legal*, but *unregulated*. In at least five states, the legal status of midwives other than CNMs is in dispute. In eight states, direct entry midwifery (practice by non-nurses) is *legally prohibited* and in six states it is *effectively prohibited*. If you wish to explore other options for midwifery practice which might be legal in your state, you can contact the appropriate state agencies (a list of state contact information has been included).

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## ***LICENSURE***

In the U.S., CNMs have the broadest scope of midwifery practice and the greatest degree of legal recognition. Licensure requirements for practice as a CNM/CM vary from state to state. Some states now require a master's degree in order for midwives to be licensed. By 2010, all ACNM ACME accredited programs will award a Masters of Science (MS) or Masters of Science in Nursing (MSN) and/or Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree. Various states require graduation from an ACNM ACME accredited educational program. Before choosing a route to certification as a nurse-midwife in the U.S., it is vital that you become familiar with the laws that govern licensure in the state(s) in which you plan to practice. Contact the ACNM Department of Government Relations at (240) 485-1844 for more information on state laws.

If you were educated as a nurse outside the U.S., or if you decide that nursing is the path for you, information about nursing education and licensure can be obtained from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing at (312) 525-3600 or visit their web site at [www.ncsbn.org](http://www.ncsbn.org). You also

can directly contact the board of nursing in your state.

Licensure options for CMs may be limited in some states. For more information on licensure options for CMs and other direct entry midwives, contact the ACNM Department of Professional Practice & Health Policy at (240) 485-1844.

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## ***EDUCATIONAL ROUTES TO BECOME A CNM OR CM***

### ***ACNM Education Programs***

ACNM sets the standards and accredits education programs for certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives, but is not an academic institution that teaches education courses for midwives. There are currently 38 education programs in the U.S. that are accredited by the ACNM Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME) (see the education program list enclosed).

Many of these education programs are for RNs interested in becoming a CNM. The majority of these programs offer an option for people who have Baccalaureate degrees in areas other than nursing to study both nursing and then midwifery. Today, there is only one program (State University of New York) that offers midwifery training for individuals who are not and will not become nurses.<sup>1</sup>

All ACNM ACME accredited education programs are affiliated with an academic institution of higher education, such as a college or university. There are two basic categories of graduate degrees: masters degree and/or the doctor of nursing practice (DNP) degree. The length of these programs varies; some offer part-time study and some require students to attend full-time. In general, a master's program takes two years of full-time study and the DNP takes 2 1/2-3 years. As of 2010, all graduates of accredited programs must have at least a Masters degree.

Some programs offer distance learning, an excellent option for prospective students who live in an area where there is no ACNM accredited program nearby. Some programs may offer a challenge mechanism which will grant credit for prior academic course work or professional experience. These study options and challenge mechanisms vary from program to program and you must obtain this information from each program you are interested in attending. Please see <http://www.midwife.org/map.cfm> for information regarding these options and contact information.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.downstate.edu/CHRP/midwifery/index.html> for information about this program.

### ***Programs Specifically for FENMs***

In the past, there were programs specifically for FENMs. Because of changes in degree requirements and educational content, it was decided that the best educational route for FENMs was through one of the existing ACNM accredited education programs.

One education program, the **Midwifery Institute of Philadelphia University**, has subsequently developed a path specifically for foreign education midwives. In order to qualify for that option, you must: have a bachelor's degree and be a registered nurse licensed in the United States. If you meet these qualifications, you may want to contact the Admissions Coordinator for additional information:

Philadelphia University  
222 Hayward Hall  
Schoolhouse Lane/  
Henry Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19144-5497  
Web site - <http://www.philau.edu/midwifery/>  
Phone - 215-951-2525

### ***Nurse-Midwifery Education***

**Curriculum:** The curriculum for ACNM accredited nurse-midwifery education programs consists of theory and clinical experience, based on the ACNM *Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice*. The core competencies are fundamental knowledge, skills and behaviors which enable a new graduate to practice nurse-midwifery in the U.S. Courses include gynecology, family planning, antepartum, intrapartum, and postpartum management, newborn care, professional issues, pharmacology, and primary health care.

**Requirements:** In order to be eligible for nurse-midwifery education programs, you must:

- be a **licensed registered nurse** in one of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, or U.S. territories;
- have a **baccalaureate degree** before beginning the program or attend a program that grants no less than a baccalaureate degree;

be prepared to submit a Test of English as a Foreign Language (**TOEFL**) score if English is not a first language. (Testing is available by contacting: **Educational Testing Services, Rosedale Rd., Princeton, NJ 08541 Phone: (609) 921-9000, [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)**.)

Educational Testing Services (ETS) offers two versions of the TOEFL: the internet version, TOEFL-iBT, and the written, paper-based TOEFL-PBT. For both versions, there is no passing or failing score. Score requirements are established by individual institutions and agencies. Scores are valid for two years.

Further, if you are a foreign educated nurse-midwife (you are a registered nurse), you may be asked to:

- provide evidence of formal recognition as a midwife in the country or state of preparation;
- provide transcripts of education from the country of preparation or education received in

the U.S. (The **Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS)** assists foreign trained health care professionals with credentialing information. They can be contacted at: (215) 349-8767 or [www.CGFNS.org](http://www.CGFNS.org).)

- submit scores from the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). This test is given by Educational Testing Service.

### ***Midwifery Education***

**Curriculum:** The curriculum for ACNM accredited midwifery education programs consists of theory and clinical experience, based on the two ACNM documents: *Skills, Knowledge, Competencies, and Health Sciences Prerequisite to Midwifery Practice* and *Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice*. These two documents establish the fundamental knowledge, skills and behaviors which enable a new graduate to practice midwifery in the U.S. Courses include gynecology, family planning, antepartum, intrapartum, and postpartum management, newborn care, professional issues, pharmacology, and primary health care.

**Requirements:** In order to be eligible for midwifery education programs, you must:

- have a baccalaureate degree before beginning the program or attend a program that grants no less than a baccalaureate degree;
- be prepared to submit a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score if English is not a first language. (Testing is available by contacting: **Educational Testing Services, Rosedale Rd., Princeton, NJ 08541 Phone: (609) 921-9000, [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)**.)

Further, foreign educated midwives (who are not registered nurses) may be asked to:

- provide evidence of formal recognition as a midwife in the country or state of preparation;
- provide transcripts of education from the country of preparation or education received in the U.S. (The **Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS)** assists foreign trained health care professionals with credentialing information. They can be contacted at: 215-349-8767 or [www.CGFNS.org](http://www.CGFNS.org));
- submit scores from the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). This test is given by Educational Testing Service.

### ***STEP BY STEP PROCESS***

Everyone's situation is a little bit different. Following this step by step process should help you decide what is best for you.

#### **Assess your personal situation:**

1. What is your goal: Do you want to become a CNM or a CM? If you are a foreign educated **nurse-midwife**, you will probably be most comfortable practicing in the U.S. as a CNM. As a CNM, you will be able to practice in all 50 states and you will be able to practice in hospitals. If you choose the route of becoming a CM, your practice may be limited to home birth or birth centers in some states; it all depends on the state laws and regulations where

you wish to practice.

2. How long has it been since you practiced midwifery?
3. How different is American midwifery from that practiced in your country?
4. How long will you be in the U.S. and is it worth your time, effort and money to pursue this goal at this point in your life?
5. How much will it cost you become certified in the U.S.?

**Assess the situation in the state(s) you want to practice in:**

1. What are the requirements for licensure in your state? Are CNMs the only midwives practicing legally in the state, or do you have other options?
2. Are there degree requirements? What are they?
3. Are there ACNM accredited education programs in your state?

**If you've decided that you want to practice as a CNM in the U.S.,** you will first need to take the steps necessary to become a RN in the U.S.

1. Contact your state board of nursing
2. Forward all necessary transcripts to the appropriate agency
3. Arrange to take the NCLEX examination (Web site: [www.ncsbn.org](http://www.ncsbn.org))

Once you've become an RN in the U.S., you may apply to one of the ACNM accredited nurse-midwifery education programs.

**If you decide to apply to an ACNM accredited education program:**

1. Be aware of what the pre-requisites are. You may be able to start taking courses like physical assessment or pharmacology.
2. Each program has slightly different requirements, so follow their instructions. For instance, many require an exam like the GRE or MAT.
3. You will probably want to use a transcript evaluation service.
4. You will probably need to take the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) if English is not your first language.

**If you decide that you want to practice as a CM in the U.S.:**

There is currently only one ACNM accredited program to prepare CMs: State University of New York, Downstate Medical Center. Contact them directly for more information at <http://www.downstate.edu/CHRP/midwifery/index.html>.

## ***THE IMPORTANCE OF STATE LAWS AND REGULATIONS***

When people ask questions about midwifery practice in the U.S., very often the answer is “It depends on the state you are in.” **Each state in the United States has its own laws and regulations that govern the practice of midwifery.** The most widely recognized midwifery credential in the U.S. is the CNM: If you become a CNM, you will be able to be licensed in all

50 states. If you pursue becoming a CM or seeking another midwifery credential, be aware that your ability to be licensed and practice may vary from state to state. Contact the ACNM Department of Government Relations at 240-485-1844 for information on state laws.

There are some states that do not require AMCB certification in order to practice as a nurse-midwife. For example, in California there is a licensure mechanism that allows FENMs to practice as nurse-midwives. The applicant's credentials are extensively reviewed and the state may require educational preparation over and above the course of study that you took in your native country. If you become a nurse-midwife in California and leave the state, your certification may not be recognized in other states. As is true with any state, you should contact the state agency that governs nurse-midwifery for more information. In California, that would be the Department of Consumer Affairs; their address and phone number is listed on page 12.

#### *New York State*

The New York State Department of Education is a recognized accrediting agency by the U.S. Department of Education. Unlike other states, New York can establish educational routes and/or requirements for recognition of prior education for FENMs and FEMs who are residents of New York. By meeting these state requirements, FENMs and FEMs are eligible to take the AMCB national certification exam to become a CNM or CM and may not have to graduate from an ACNM accredited education program. If you qualify to take this exam and pass it, you will then be able to be licensed by the State of New York and be able to practice within that state. The State of New York may require educational preparation over and above the course of study that you took in your native country.

If you are a CM in the State of New York and leave that state, your certification may not be recognized in other states. Contact the New York State Department of Education for more information. Their address and phone is listed on page 12.

### ***THE AMERICAN MIDWIFERY CERTIFICATION BOARD, INC.***

The American Midwifery Certification Board, Inc is a separate corporate entity from ACNM. AMCB writes and administers the national certification examination and awards nurse-midwifery and midwifery certification. In order to be certified by the AMCB you must:

- Graduate from an ACNM accredited education program OR meet the New York State Department of Education equivalency routes, and
- successfully complete the national exam.

More detailed information is available from AMCB. You will find contact information on page 12 of this booklet.

#### ***Certification Maintenance***

Candidates who take the national certification examination will be issued a certificate that expires 8 years after issue. AMCB has developed a Certification Maintenance Program (CMP)

that must be completed in order to receive a new certificate for another 8 year period. For more information about the CMP or certification in general, contact AMCB.

## ***THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF NURSE-MIDWIVES***

### ***A Professional Association***

The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM), founded in 1955, is a professional organization for certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives in the U.S. It is autonomous and speaks for its membership on issues affecting education, practice, recognition, and reimbursement. Since its inception, ACNM has worked to improve the health of women and newborns.

### ***Professional Issues***

ACNM has developed various policies, guidelines, and standards to govern and assess midwifery practice for its members. These include:

- Statement of Philosophy
- Standards for the Practice of Nurse-Midwifery
- Code of Ethics
- Continuing Competency Assessment and Continuing Education Mechanisms
- Guidelines for Quality Assurance and Peer Review

ACNM also has divisions and committees that focus on various midwifery issues. These include:

Division of Standards & Practice	Midwives of Color Committee
Division of Research	International Health Committee
Division of Education	Government Affairs Committee

### ***Membership Benefits***

You do not need to be a CNM or CM to receive benefits from ACNM. You may affiliate with ACNM as an Associate Member, or if you are enrolled in an ACNM accredited education program, you may join as a student member. Benefits include:

- Subscriptions to the bimonthly publications *The Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health* and *Quickening*
- Discount rates for ACNM Annual Meeting and Exhibit and other ACNM meetings and conferences
- Discounts on ACNM publications ordered through [www.shopACNM.com](http://www.shopACNM.com)

- Opportunity to network with local CNMs and CMs at chapter events

## ***SUMMARY***

ACNM hopes this information will assist you on your journey to becoming a midwife in the U.S. While ACNM does not provide career counseling services, we are committed to the profession of midwifery and we invite you to take advantage of the information available through our web site at [www.midwife.org](http://www.midwife.org). As we have stated in this information, you should follow up as appropriate with these organizations for additional information:

**Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS)**

3600 Market Street, Suite 400  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2651  
Applicant Inquiries: (215) 349-8767

Or click on the web site:

[www.CGFNS.org](http://www.CGFNS.org)

**Educational Testing Service**

Rosedale Road  
Princeton, NJ 08541  
Phone: (609) 921-9000

Or click on the web site:

[www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)

**National Council of State Boards of Nursing**

111 E. Wacker Drive  
Suite 2900  
Chicago, IL 60601  
Phone number: (312) 525-3600

Testing: (866) 293-9600

Or click on the web site: [www.ncsbn.org](http://www.ncsbn.org)

**New York State Department of Education**

Office of Comparative Education  
Cultural Education Center  
Albany, NY 12230  
(845) 426-5430

**American Midwifery Certification Board**

849 International Drive, Suite 205  
Linthicum, MD 21090  
Phone number: 866-366-9632  
Fax number: (410) 694-9425

[www.amcbmidwife.org](http://www.amcbmidwife.org)

**California Department of Consumer Affairs**

Registered Nursing Board  
400 R Street, Ste. 4030  
Sacramento, CA 95814-6200  
(916) 322-3350

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY FOREIGN EDUCATED MIDWIVES AND NURSE-MIDWIVES**

These are answers to the questions most frequently asked by Foreign Educated Nurse-Midwives (FENMs) and Foreign Education Midwives (FEMs) who contact the ACNM.

***Q. How long will it take me to become a CNM or CM?***

It depends on your educational background, your past experience as a midwife, and on what state you are living in. It could take as little as one year or as long as five years.

The quickest route also may not be the best route for you. You should take into account your personal situation and professional goals before deciding the best route. You might consider:

- Where you want to practice (hospital, home, birth center)
- The ability to transfer recognition from one state to another
- Reimbursement for professional services
- Ability to practice with other health care professionals
- Availability of professional liability insurance

***Q. If I go to an ACNM accredited education program, what type of degree will I receive upon graduation?***

This depends upon the program. By 2010, all programs will award a minimum of a masters degree. A number of graduate programs offer a master's completion option for CNMs and CMs with a certificate in midwifery. Some programs are offering the new DNP degree. For the specific type of degree awarded by a program, see [http://www.midwife.org/eduprog\\_all.cfm](http://www.midwife.org/eduprog_all.cfm) or contact the program directly.

***Q. What are the minimum requirements to enter into an ACNM accredited nurse-midwifery or midwifery education program?***

Each program establishes its own prerequisites for admission. See [http://www.midwife.org/eduprog\\_all.cfm](http://www.midwife.org/eduprog_all.cfm) or directly contact the program you are interested in about specific program prerequisites.

***Q. Will I get credit for my previous midwifery education?***

It is possible that you may be able to challenge one or more of the required midwifery courses. In order to find out about this possibility, contact the program you are interested in.

***Q. What are the differences between a master's and doctor of nursing practice degree when I try to find employment?***

The DNP is a very new degree and it is not clear whether or not employers will offer any salary differential for this degree. Although several schools of nursing in which nurse-midwifery education programs reside are beginning to offer the DNP degree, the American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB) will not be requiring the DNP as an entry to practice requirement for midwifery certification.

***Q. Are the programs rated or ranked in any kind of order or preference?***

No. All nurse-midwifery and midwifery education programs accredited by ACNM must meet the set criteria in order to receive preaccreditation or accreditation status. They must be affiliated with an institution of higher learning.

***Q. What if I'm interested in attending a program, but do not know if it is accredited by ACNM?***

ACNM ACME accredited programs are required to report their accreditation status to potential students. You can also contact ACNM or visit the web site at [www.midwife.org](http://www.midwife.org) to verify if a program is accredited or not by the ACNM ACME. There are other educational programs or routes that may or may not have met the standards of another organization, such as a state accrediting agency, and may or may not be affiliated with an institution of higher learning. You should ask the program directly for information about accreditation, recognition, and affiliations.

***Q. What if I'm not a registered nurse in the U.S.?***

Becoming a registered nurse (RN) in the U.S. is only a requirement to become a certified nurse-midwife not a certified midwife. If you were a nurse in your country of preparation, we recommend you contact the National Council of State Boards of Nursing or the board of nursing in your state to find out how to become an RN in the U.S.

If you have never been a nurse but want to become a CNM and have a baccalaureate degree in a field other than nursing that is recognized in the U.S., we recommend that you contact the nurse-midwifery program(s) you are interested in attending and ask what their specific admissions requirements are for non-nurses. You will generally have one of three routes to follow:

- 1) Graduate from a 4-year university program that awards a bachelor's of science in nursing (BSN) and apply to the nurse-midwifery education program;
- 2) Graduate from a community college program that awards an associates degree in nursing (ADN) and apply to the nurse-midwifery education program;
- 3) Graduate from a university nursing program that is accelerated or compressed into one to one and a half years and apply to the nurse-midwifery education program. This option is available in the majority of nurse-midwifery education programs and are sometimes referred to as 3-year nurse-midwifery education programs. Please see [http://www.midwife.org/eduprog\\_options.cfm?id=2](http://www.midwife.org/eduprog_options.cfm?id=2) for a list of midwifery education programs that offer this option.

***Q. What if I am a U.S. RN who does not have a baccalaureate degree?***

If you are a U.S. recognized RN who does not have a BSN or baccalaureate degree in another field, you must either have a baccalaureate degree before admission or find a program that will provide such a degree prior to entering the midwifery portion of the program. Please see [http://www.midwife.org/eduprog\\_options.cfm?id=1](http://www.midwife.org/eduprog_options.cfm?id=1) for a list of such programs.

***Q. What if there isn't an education program near me?***

Many education programs offer "distance learning" options to students for both academic course work and/or clinical experience. Please see <http://www.midwife.org/map.cfm> to obtain the lists of "Fully distance" and "Partially distance" education programs, or directly contact the program you are interested in about distance learning opportunities.

***Q. Why are some programs preaccredited while others are accredited?***

Preaccreditation and accreditation status does not denote which programs are better than others. Nurse-midwifery and midwifery education programs must receive preaccreditation status before they can admit students who will be eligible to take the AMCB national certification exam upon graduation, and before the program can receive accreditation status. These programs have met the ACNM ACME's Criteria for Preaccreditation. After a preaccredited program has graduated its first class, the program is eligible to receive accreditation status from the ACNM ACME by meeting the Criteria for Accreditation. The Criteria for Preaccreditation and the Criteria for Accreditation are virtually the same requirements.

***Q. Must I have a bachelor's of science in nursing (BSN) to attend a nurse-midwifery education program?***

Not necessarily. ACNM accreditation criteria for nurse-midwifery programs require that students be registered nurses (RNs), but don't require a BSN. Programs have the option, though, of requiring a BSN as a prerequisite for admission and some programs do have that requirement. Consult [http://www.midwife.org/eduprog\\_all.cfm](http://www.midwife.org/eduprog_all.cfm) or directly contact the individual program(s) you are interested in to find out.

***Q. Are there mandatory degree requirements for nurse-midwifery or midwifery education?***

By 2010, education programs accredited by the ACNM ACME must grant at least a master's degree upon graduation.

***Q. What kind of salary does a CNM or CM make?***

CNM salaries average from \$80,000 to \$90,000+ per year. A number of variables can affect salaries for CNMs and CMs including: type of practice setting (private practice, hospital, birth center, home birth, health clinic), geographic part of the country, type of location (urban or rural), benefits packages offered with salary, hours worked per week, and type of care provided (full-scope of women's health services, pre-natal care, gynecologic care, etc).

***Q. What are the job opportunities for CNMs and CMs?***

CNM/CMs work in a variety of settings including private practices, hospitals, birth centers, health clinics, and home birth services. The numbers and types of opportunities available to new

graduates often depend on the individual's work preference and vary across the country and in different locations (urban or rural). It is also possible for CNMs/CMs with entrepreneurial spirits to set up their own practices, establishing themselves as health care providers in the community of their choice.

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