



POSITION STATEMENT

Mandatory Degree Requirements for Entry into Midwifery Practice

It is the position of the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) that

- Certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) must be educated according to the ACNM Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice.¹
- As of 2010, completion of a graduate degree program became an added requirement for certification and entry into clinical practice.
- The professional competencies and analytical skills developed and fostered in the course of graduate education contribute to the profession and to the success of the graduates themselves.
- The value of graduate degree preparation in midwifery, nursing, public health, and other related fields is widely recognized. However, the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree will not be a requirement for entry to practice for CNMs or CMs.²
- CNMs and CMs educated prior to 2010 in certificate programs without graduate degrees should retain their licensure to practice without the added requirement of a graduate degree, and granting such midwives licensure to practice in additional states is recommended.

Background

ACNM has set the standard for education programs for certified nurse-midwives CNMs since 1962 and for CMs since 1994. The clinical safety of entry-level midwifery practice has been and will continue to be assured by several mechanisms:

- The ACNM document, Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice,¹ provides standardized, entry-level competencies that must be mastered in all education programs. This document is updated periodically.
- The Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME) (formerly the ACNM Division of Accreditation [DOA]) assesses the quality and content of midwifery education programs. ACME is recognized by the United States Department of Education as an accrediting agency. ACME currently accredits independent institutions as well as nurse-midwifery and midwifery programs affiliated with institutions of higher learning and accredits programs in institutions that offer distance education options.
- The American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB) is responsible for developing and administering the national certification examination. AMCB is a member of the National Organization for Certifying Agencies (NOCA) and is certified by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

ACNM has a history of affirming the value of midwifery education programs by awarding either a graduate degree or a certificate. ACNM continues to affirm the value of the certificate route for entry into midwifery practice for students with previously earned graduate degrees and those concurrently enrolled in graduate degree programs.

ACNM's recommendation regarding the licensing of CNMs and CMs who were educated without graduate degrees prior to 2010 is in alignment with the grandfathering clause for licensure, Footnote 7, in the Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification & Education.³

REFERENCES

1. American College of Nurse Midwives. Core competencies for basic midwifery practice. http://www.midwife.org/ACNM/files/ACNMLibraryData/UPLOADFILENAME/000000000050/Core_Competencies_6_07.pdf. Published January 15, 2008. Accessed April 28, 2012.
 2. American College of Nurse Midwives. Midwifery education and the doctor of nursing practice (DNP). <http://www.midwife.org/ACNM/files/ACNMLibraryData/UPLOADFILENAME/000000000079/Midwifery%20Ed%20and%20DNP%207.09.pdf>. Published July 8, 2009. Accessed May 2, 2012.
 3. APRN Consensus Work Group & the National Council of State Boards of Nursing APRN Advisory Committee. Consensus model for APRN regulation: licensure, accreditation, certification & education. <http://nursingworld.org/DocumentVault/APRN-Resource-Section/ConsensusModelforAPRNRegulation.pdf>. Published July 7, 2008. Accessed May 2, 2012.
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Note. Midwifery as used throughout this document refers to the education and practice of certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) who have been certified by the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) or the American Midwifery Certification Board, Inc. (AMCB), formerly the ACNM Certification Council, Inc. (ACC).

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