Support for Pregnant and Parenting Teens and Women: Health Care Reform Law (111-148)

**Background:** Lack of access to necessary services can limit educational opportunities for pregnant and parenting teens and women and hinder their access to health care, child care, and family housing. Allowing institutions of higher education to bring parenting student services and resources to campus can help address this challenge.

**ACNM Position / Policy:** ACNM is a strong supporter of this provision of the health care reform law.

**Summary of Provisions**

Section 10212 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act established a Pregnancy Assistance Fund. The 10-year, $250 million competitive grant program (FY 2010–2019) is designed to help pregnant and parenting teens and women complete their education and gain access to health care, child care, family housing and other critical assistance. States may apply to use this money to create a network of support services for pregnant and parenting teens and college students. Such funding shall be used to supplement, not supplant, existing funding for such services.

Funds can be used by a State in coordination with institutions of higher education to

1) conduct a needs assessment on campus and within the local community to

   a. assess pregnancy and parenting resources, located on the campus or within the local community; and
   b. set goals for improving such resources for pregnant, parenting, and prospective parenting students, as well as improve access to such resources;

2) annually assess the performance of the eligible institution in meeting the needs of students enrolled in the eligible institution who are pregnant or are parents to include

   a. maternity coverage and the availability of riders for additional family members in student health care;
   b. family housing;
   c. child care;
d. flexible or alternative academic scheduling, such as telecommuting programs, to enable pregnant or parenting students to continue their education or stay in school;

e. education to improve parenting skills for mothers and fathers and to strengthen marriages;

f. maternity and baby clothing, baby food (including formula), baby furniture, and similar items to assist parents and prospective parents in meeting the material needs of their children; and

g. postpartum counseling;

3) identify public and private service providers, located on the campus of the eligible institution or within the local community;

4) assist pregnant and parenting students, fathers, or spouses in locating and obtaining services;

5) provide referrals for prenatal care and delivery, infant or foster care, or adoption, to a student who requests such information. An office shall make such referrals only to service providers that serve parents, prospective parents awaiting adoption, women who are pregnant and plan on parenting, those who are placing the child for adoption, and prospective parenting couples.

A State may use funding under Section 10212 to make funding available to eligible high schools and community service centers to establish, maintain, or operate pregnancy and parenting services. A State may also provide funds to its State Attorney General to assist statewide offices in providing 1) intervention services, accompaniment, and supportive social services for eligible pregnant women who are victims of domestic violence, sexual violence, sexual assault, or stalking; and 2) technical assistance and training relating to violence against eligible pregnant women. Amounts received by a State may also be used to increase public awareness and education regarding any services available to pregnant and parenting teens and women.

**Timeline for Implementation:** 2010-2019

**Agency Responsible for Implementation/Enforcement:** The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in coordination with the U.S. Department of Education

**Impact on Nurse-Midwives:** Resources provided in this section of the health reform law can assist in providing women access to midwifery services in their communities as well as increase awareness of midwifery services.

**References:** Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, S.3590, 111th Congress, 2nd Sess (2010).