



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **ACNM FORMS PRESIDENTIAL TASK FORCE ON HEALTH CARE REFORM**

**Silver Spring, MD** - With health care reform once again on the national agenda, the **American College of Nurse-Midwives** has formed a Presidential Task Force on Health Care Reform to educate health policy makers and legislators about the contribution that certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives make to improve the care of women and childbearing families.

“It is generally accepted that the United States can do more to improve the health of all women and their newborn infants and to reduce the disparities in population groups. For nearly 80 years, studies of nurse-midwifery care have repeatedly demonstrated that, in collaboration with obstetrical specialist care, the rates of prematurity, low birth weight babies, and medical interventions such as cesarean section can be reduced and the health and welfare of mothers and babies improved. Furthermore, midwifery care reduces costs to insurers, families and the system as a whole. The women who have been cared for by midwives have a high rate of satisfaction with the care they received, and their collaborating physicians report that it improves their ability to offer more comprehensive care,” says ACNM President Eunice K.M. Ernst, CNM, MPH, DSc(HON), FACNM. “With the formation of this task force, ACNM is preparing to ensure that midwifery is included in proposals for health care reform. It is a model of care proven to be part of the solution for improving the health and welfare of mothers and families, while simultaneously reducing costs.”

Pregnancy and childbirth are major drivers of rising health care costs in this country. Childbirth remains the number one reason for hospitalization, and childbirth is the most performed procedure performed in America's hospitals today. In 2003, 4 million hospitalizations for women giving birth accounted for 11 percent of all stays in U.S. community hospitals. The average charge for childbirth was \$8,300. The aggregate charge (i.e., national bill) for these hospital stays totaled over \$33 billion. The average charges associated with uncomplicated C-sections were \$11,500, which is more than \$5,000 greater than the mean charge for all routine vaginal deliveries. (Source: <http://www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/reports/statbriefs/sb11.pdf> )

The ACNM task force is chaired by Marion McCartney, CNM, FACNM. Click here for the full list of [task force members](#). For more information, visit [http://www.midwife.org/healthcare\\_reform.cfm](http://www.midwife.org/healthcare_reform.cfm).

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With roots dating to 1929, the American College of Nurse-Midwives is the oldest women's health care association in the U.S. ACNM's mission is to promote the health and well-being of women and newborns within their families and communities through the development and support of the profession

of midwifery as practiced by certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives. Midwives believe every individual has the right to safe, satisfying health care with respect for human dignity and cultural variations. More information about ACNM can be found at [www.midwife.org](http://www.midwife.org).

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