

FACT SHEET

Midwives and Federally Qualified Health Centers

FQHCs across the country have found that certified nurse-midwives (CNMs®) and certified midwives (CMs®) offer a safe, patient-friendly solution to providing women's health care to all women. Midwives are the ideal solution to staffing FQHCs. The work of midwives in FQHCs consistently produces impressive results.

FQHCs contract with CNMs and CMs for care of women through the life span, including care during pregnancy and labor, and midwives have a long history of providing quality, evidence-based care to underserved women. The number of midwives at FQHCs increased 37% between 2006 and 2010, and midwives provided more than 1.2 million patient encounters in 2010.¹

Health centers strive to provide comprehensive, culturally appropriate care, with a "whole person" approach, values that are specifically addressed in the hallmarks of midwifery care.² With similar philosophies, midwives and FQHCs are a great match.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are CNMs and CMs licensed?

Certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) are licensed to practice in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Certified midwives (CMs) are licensed to practice in New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Delaware and Missouri.

What can CNMs/CMs do?

CNMs/CMs provide a number of women's health care services that compliment medical practice. CNMs/CMs are primary care providers who are educated to perform a comprehensive women's health assessment, screen for and treat common health problems, and prescribe medications, including contraception. They also provide prenatal care and a full range of gynecological care. Some CNMs/

1 Carter, MC. Nurse-Midwives in Federally Funded Health Centers: Understanding Federal Program Requirements and Benefits. *J Midwifery Women's Health* 2012;57:365-370.

2 American College of Nurse-Midwives website. Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice. <http://www.midwife.org/ACNM/files/ACNMLibraryData/UPLOADFILENAME/000000000050/Core%20Comptencies%20Dec%202012.pdf>. [Accessed July 25, 2014].



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CMs see only normal, healthy pregnant women, while others provide maternity care in high risk clinics where medical conditions are managed collaboratively with physicians. CNM/CM scope of practice in the hospital setting includes admission history and physical exams, management of uncomplicated and co-management of selected problem labors, attending normal spontaneous vaginal deliveries, cutting and repairing episiotomies and repairing lacerations, and providing postpartum care. With specialized training, some CNMs/CMs do advanced procedures such as colposcopy, endometrial biopsy, ultrasonic evaluation and first assist at cesarean section and other surgeries.

How are certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives educated?

CNMs are educated in two disciplines: midwifery and nursing. They earn graduate degrees, complete a midwifery education program accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME), and pass a national certification examination administered by the American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB) to receive the professional designation of CNM.

CMs are educated in the discipline of midwifery. They earn graduate degrees, meet health and science education requirements, complete a midwifery education program accredited by ACME, and pass the same national certification examination as CNMs to receive the professional designation of CM.

There are currently 38 accredited programs in the US, many in prestigious universities such as Yale, Columbia, Georgetown, and Vanderbilt. Most CNM/CMs have a master's degree or higher. Many have worked for a number of years as a nurse; some hold degrees in public health; and some are also physician assistants and nurse practitioners.

Can CNMs/CMs get hospital privileges?

Yes. As of 2012, 95% of the births attended by CNMs/CMs were hospital births. In hospitals throughout the country, CNMs/CMs have clinical privileges and are credentialed by the medical staff based on the Joint Commission Hospital Accreditation Standards.

Can CNMs/CMs bill insurance, Medicaid and Medicare?

Both the Medicaid and Medicare laws permit reimbursement to certified nurse-midwives. The majority of insurance programs allow reimbursement to CNMs as either a primary or point of service provider. Billing can be for prenatal care, labor and delivery, family planning, and women's health services, and more. Services provided by CMs are not explicitly covered under either Medicaid or Medicare.

Private insurers make their own decisions about coverage of CNM and CM services. Most private insurers choose to contract with CNMs and in states where CMs are licensed, they may also choose to contract with CMs to include them in their provider directories.

For more information about billing for CNM/CM services, visit <http://www.midwife.org/shop-acnm> to purchase *Getting Paid, 4th Edition* (ACNM).

How can I find a midwife?

www.MidwifeJobs.com is the perfect place to find a CNM/CM to work at your health center. You may contact the American College of Nurse-Midwives membership department (memb@acnm.org) for assistance in posting a job.

For more information on CNMs and CMs, please visit our website at www.midwife.org, or you may contact Tina Johnson, CNM, MS, Director of Professional Practice & Health Policy, at (240) 485-1840 or tjohnson@acnm.org.

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