



NEWS RELEASE

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ACOG Endorses Full Equity for CNM® and CM® Reimbursement under Medicare

SILVER SPRING, MD - The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM), the nation's oldest women's health organization, is pleased to announce that the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) has reaffirmed its support for equitable reimbursement for certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) within the Medicare program, a priority legislative initiative for ACNM members.

“We continue to support reimbursement equity for certified nurse-midwives,” stated Dr. Gerald Joseph, Jr., MD, FACOG, president of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG). “We continue to support certification [of CNMs and CMs] by the American Midwifery Certification Board...*” Joseph noted that “Our patients are well-served when we work well and closely together.”

CNMs and CMs provide primary and gynecologic care to women of all ages, as well as prenatal and delivery services. CNMs and CMs attended 317,168 births in 2006 – a 33% increase since 1996. Since 1988, the Medicare program has authorized CNMs and CMs to provide maternity care for disabled women of childbearing age who qualify for coverage. In 1993, Congress authorized CNMs to provide additional services outside the maternity cycle for all women under Medicare. While most state Medicaid plans reimburse midwives at the same rate as physician counterparts, a 35% disparity in reimbursement exists within the Medicare program. This payment inequity is a significant barrier to women's access to midwifery care within the program.

“ACNM welcomes ACOG's support for equitable reimbursement for services provided by CNMs and CMs certified by AMCB,” stated ACNM President Melissa Avery, PhD, CNM, FACNM, FAAN. “ACNM is committed to ensuring that health care reform includes key policy reforms designed to increase access to essential maternity and primary care services provided by CNMs and CMs.”

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* The American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB), formerly the ACNM Certification Council, Inc. (ACC) is the national certifying body for CNMs and CMs. From 1971 to 1991, certification rested within the American College of Nurse-Midwives. ACC was incorporated as a separate organization in 1991 and changed its name to the American Midwifery Certification Board in 2005.

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.