



March 2019

## **ACNM Opposes State Legislative Threats to Abortion Care**

The American College of Nurse-Midwives supports policy solutions that ensure all people have access to a full-range of preventive, reproductive, and sexual health services. The world's major health and human rights organizations affirm that when individuals have full autonomy over their reproductive health, it elevates level of education and economic growth for themselves and their families, benefitting entire communities.

As midwives, we trust our patients as the experts of their own well-being and support each person's right to self-determination, access to comprehensive health information, and active participation in all aspects of an individualized plan of care. Our code of ethics mandates that we engage in a process of non-coercive, evidence-based informed consent, and shared decision making. Therefore, we object to any legislation and/or regulation that interferes with the patient-provider relationship. We are gravely concerned about recent attempts to hamper access to evidence-informed abortion care.

Several states, including North Dakota and North Carolina, have recently introduced bills that would require providers to counsel patients that medication abortion is "reversible," which is not evidence-based. West Virginia seeks to prohibit any provider except a physician from providing abortion care, despite a robust body of research indicating that nurse practitioners, nurse-midwives, and physician assistants provide equally safe care. Several states currently have proposed legislation to prohibit abortion after six weeks gestation. Such legislation forces clinicians to ignore evidence and standards of care while preventing access to legal abortion care as protected under *Roe v. Wade*.

ACNM recognizes that there are a multitude of reasons why an individual may elect to terminate a pregnancy. Our role as midwives is to provide patient-centered, non-judgmental, and evidence-based care regardless of the patient's pregnancy intention or outcome as well as any personal biases we may hold. As such, ACNM reaffirms its commitment to individual patient autonomy across the spectrum of reproductive health, including abortion.

This commitment includes supporting our midwife members in advocating to keep abortion access unconditionally safe and legal. As we recognize the vital role access to comprehensive reproductive and sexual health plays in reducing health and economic disparities, we will continue to voice our opposition to state and federal legislation and/or regulation that aims to restrict access to the full-range of sexual and reproductive health services, including abortion, or compromise the safety of such care.