

advocate for midwifery

as of august 2019, there are approximately 15,000 certified nurse midwives, certified midwives, and certified professional midwives and 33,000 OB/GYNs in the United States.

but midwives are still only attending 9.1% of the 350,000 births annually in the country. it's time to make midwifery **the standard of care** for every woman.

midwives are the solution. here's how to advocate for the profession...

for midwives: support the training pipeline

Precept midwifery students

"Midwifery program directors **consistently indicate** that they could increase graduation rates if more clinical sites and preceptors were available for midwifery students" (ACNM & ACME, p. 10, 2019).

for everyone: help grow the midwifery force

Increase the number of midwife training programs

24 states do not have an ACME midwifery program. Adocate for a program at your state universities. Women birth babies in all 50 states – midwifery training should not be held back by state lines.

Support and increase federal, state and private funding.

Increase federal funding for midwifery training programs (similar to OB/GYN residency funding and encourage private donors/foundations to support midwifery programs.

Advocate for full practice authority in all 50 states.

Did you know that states that allow autonomous practice for CNMs have lower cesarean rates, preterm birth rates, and low birth weights than states without autonomous CNM practice (Tony Yang, Attanasio, & Kozhimannil, 2016)? Full practice authority is a no brainer.

Equal reimbursement.

Midwives should be reimbursed the exact same as the OB/GYN when performing pregnancy care or a vaginal birth. Reimbursement percentages are decided at the state level and every state is different.

Interprofessional education.

"Put the midwife in the model." Increase models that support midwifery education. The maternity care workforce is strnegthened by the presence and practice of midwives.

Diversify the workforce

Patients are more likely to comply and complete recommended care from an individual of their own ethnicity or race.

how women can help!

Choose midwifery care for your pregnancy, birth and well-woman needs.

Check to see if your insurance covers midwifery care for preconception care, pregnancy care, birth, postpartum visits, well woman exams, and visits for other women's health concerns (vaginal infections, breast lumps, contraception, cervical dysplasia, menopause...). During pregnancy or during birth, ask if there is a midwife available to care for you – and don't be afraid to ask!

Do a simple google search to find midwives in your area or use this site from ACNM: <https://www.midwife.org/find-a-midwife>.

It matters where you decide to put your healthcare dollars! Most women have a midwife in their community – all you have to do it look!

Share your stories of midwifery care and how your midwife compared to other obstetric care you received.

Women will always remember their birth stories. There's never been a more important time to share about the normalcy of pregnancy and birth. Follow midwives and women's health initiatives on social media platforms to share and hear stories.

Register to vote in your state and keep up with legislation related to healthcare, pregnancy, women, birth and midwives.

Policy is an indisputable, integral piece of bringing midwifery to the front lines of birth across the United States. Your voice has never been so important. Find your state legislators at <https://www.congress.gov/state-legislature-websites>. Take a few minutes to send them an email voicing your support for midwives or legislation supportive of advancing the spread of midwifery practice.

References: American College of Nurse-Midwives & Accreditation for Midwifery Education. (2019). "Midwifery Education Trends Report - 2019", 1-13; American College of Nurse-Midwives. (2019). Essential facts about midwives. <https://www.midwife.org/acnm/files/cclibraryfiles/filename/000000007531/essentialfactsaboutmidwives-updated.pdf>