

# BENEFITS of LICENSING Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs)



Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) serve a disproportionate number of low-income, rural, immigrant and uninsured families. Regulation and licensure of CPMs ensures that there are enough well-trained midwives to meet the demand for out-of-hospital birth and to provide safe and affordable maternity care for underserved populations.

In June 2005, the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL published the latest study in a large body of medical research showing that out-of-hospital birth for healthy women using CPMs results in outcomes equivalent to those of a comparable cohort of women giving birth in hospitals, but with much lower rates of avoidable and costly interventions.

## CPM licensure protects and defends the rights of American women and families by:

- Providing a mechanism for families choosing out-of-hospital birth to verify their midwife's training, skills and educational credentials
- Ensuring adherence to evidence-based practices and providing for transparency and accountability
- Ensuring continuity of care and offering liability protection to physicians who collaborate with midwives
- Providing access to:
  - A family-centered model of maternity care that offers individualized education, counseling, screening and pre-natal care
  - Continuous hands-on assistance during labor and delivery
  - Minimal use of costly technological interventions
  - Support of the physical, psychological and social well-being of mothers and families throughout the childbearing cycle
- Ensuring that every family can choose their birth provider and setting based on their religious, cultural and philosophical beliefs
- Ensuring the availability of qualified and experienced out-of-hospital maternity care providers in the event of an emergency that makes hospital care inaccessible (e.g. a hurricane or other natural disaster, or flu epidemic). Access to out-of-hospital maternity care is in keeping with the mission of the National Working Group for Women and Infant Needs in Emergencies to ensure that the health care needs of pregnant women, new mothers, newborns and infants are adequately met during and after a disaster situation.

In its resolution, **"Increasing Access to Out-of-Hospital Maternity Care Services Through State-Regulated and Nationally Certified Direct-Entry Midwives,"** the AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION (APHA) concludes that healthy mothers experiencing normal pregnancies can safely deliver in various settings, including out-of-hospital birth centers and homes.

According to the APHA, increasing access to midwives practicing in out-of-hospital settings will significantly reduce the costs of maternity care.

*American Public Health Association, "Increasing Access to Out-of-Hospital Maternity Care Services through State-Regulated and Nationally-Certified Direct-Entry Midwives (Policy Statement)." American Journal of Public Health, Vol. 92, No. 3, March 2002.*

The Big Push for Midwives Campaign is fiscally sponsored by Sustainable Markets Foundation, a not-for-profit organization recognized as tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3). The mission of the Big Push for Midwives is to build winning, state-level advocacy campaigns towards successful regulation and licensure of Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

We are envisioning a new model of U.S. maternity care built on expanding access to out-of-hospital maternity care and CPMs, who provide affordable, quality, community-based care that is proven to reduce costly and preventable interventions as well as the rate of low-birth weight and premature births.

We can no longer afford a system that produces inferior results at premium costs. **We need safe and less-costly maternity care now.**

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