

STANDARDS FOR THE PRACTICE OF MIDWIFERY

The American College of Nurse-Midwives affirms that certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) practice in accordance with the following standards. Midwifery as practiced by CNMs and CMs:

encompasses the independent provision of care during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period; sexual and reproductive health; gynecologic health; and family planning services, including preconception care. Midwives also provide primary care for individuals from adolescence throughout the lifespan as well as care for the healthy newborn during the first 28 days of life. Midwives provide care for all individuals who seek midwifery care, inclusive of all gender identities and sexual orientations. CM/CNMs exist in a community of all midwives, and we respect and elevate the importance of having midwifery care available for all people who want it.¹

These standards apply to those midwives certified by the American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB).

STANDARD I

Midwifery Care Is Provided by Qualified Practitioners.

The midwife:

1. Graduates from a program accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME).
2. Is certified by AMCB.
3. Shows evidence of continuing competency as required by AMCB.
4. Follows the legal requirements of the jurisdiction where the midwifery practice occurs.

STANDARD II

Midwifery Care Is Composed of Knowledge, Skills, and Clinical Judgments That Foster the Delivery of Evidence-Informed, Client-Centered Care.

The midwife:

1. Practices in accordance with the ACNM *Definition of Midwifery and Scope of Practice of Certified Nurse-Midwives and Certified Midwives*¹ and hallmarks of midwifery.²
2. In collaboration with the client, collects and assesses client care data, develops and implements an individualized plan of management, and evaluates the outcomes of care, inclusive of the client's perspective.

3. Incorporates new practices beyond the *Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice*² according to ACNM position statement *Expansion of Midwifery Practice and Skills Beyond Core Competencies*.³
4. Practices in accord with best evidence.
5. Provides clients with information regarding, and/or referral to, other providers and services when requested or according to the health care needs of the client.

STANDARD III:

Midwifery Care Supports Individual Rights and Self-Determination and Respects Human Dignity, Individuality, and Diversity.

The midwife:

1. Upholds and facilitates the autonomy of all people to make informed health care decisions.
2. Demonstrates cultural humility and understanding of cultural safety affirming the dignity of all persons.
3. Supports self-determination and shared decision-making within the context of the family, the community, and the health care setting.
4. Practices in accord with the *Philosophy of the American College of Nurse-Midwives*⁴ and the *Code of Ethics*.⁵

STANDARD IV

Midwifery Care Occurs Within the Context of the Family, Community, History, and a System of Health Care.

The midwife:

1. Demonstrates knowledge that the individual resides within a context of health care, legal, structural, historical, psychosocial, economic, cultural, and family dynamics that affect health, perceptions of care, outcomes of care, and satisfaction with care.
2. Engages with the individual, community, and other health professionals to promote and improve health outcomes.
3. Promotes the involvement of support persons as a key element of health care.

STANDARD V

Midwifery Care Is Documented in a Format That Is Accessible, Confidential, and Complete.

The midwife:

1. Uses records that facilitate interprofessional communication.

2. Maintains timely and complete documentation of evaluation, course of management, and outcomes of care.
3. Complies with all regulatory standards for the documentation and transmission of health records.
4. Maintains confidentiality in all communications related to client care.
5. Maintains documentation that reflects the client's individual dignity and chief concerns using language that strives to be bias free.
6. Provides clients with a means to access their health care records.

STANDARD VI

Midwifery Care Is Evaluated According to an Established Process for Quality Management.

The midwife:

1. Regularly participates in a process of quality management for the practice.
2. Performs systematic collection of practice data.
3. Uses data to document, analyze, and improve midwifery practice.
4. Acts to address any findings, as appropriate.

References

1. American College of Nurse-Midwives. Definition of midwifery and scope of practice of certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives. Published December 2021. Updated December 2021. Accessed July 28, 2022.
http://www.midwife.org/acnm/files/acnmldata/uploadfilename/000000000266/Definition%20Midwifery%20Scope%20of%20Practice_2021.pdf
2. American College of Nurse-Midwives. *Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice*. Published March 20, 2020. Accessed July 27, 2022.
https://www.midwife.org/acnm/files/acnmldata/uploadfilename/000000000050/ACNMCORECompetenciesMar2020_final.pdf
3. American College of Nurse-Midwives. Expansion of midwifery practice and skills beyond basic core competencies. Published September 10, 2022. Accessed September 15, 2022.
http://www.midwife.org/acnm/files/acnmldata/uploadfilename/000000000066/2022_ps_expansion-of-midwifery-practice-beyond-core-competencies.pdf
4. American College of Nurse-Midwives. Philosophy of the American College of Nurse-Midwives. Updated September 2004. Accessed July 28, 2022.
<http://www.midwife.org/default.aspx?bid=59&cat=2&button=Search&rec=49>
5. American College of Nurse-Midwives. Code of ethics. Updated December 2013. Accessed July 28, 2022.

<http://www.midwife.org/acnm/files/ACNMLibraryData/UPLOADFILENAME/000000000048/Code-of-Ethics.pdf>

Note. Midwifery and midwives as used throughout this document refer to the education and practice of certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) who have been certified by the American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB).

Original Source: Division of Standards and Practice

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(Supersedes the ACNM's Functions, Standards and Qualifications, 1983 and Standards for the Practice of Nurse-Midwifery 1987, 1993)