



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **ACNM Commends IOM Report on the Future of Nursing**

**SILVER SPRING, MD**— The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) commends the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for their report on the *“Future of the Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health,”* which was released earlier this week.

“This report acknowledges what ACNM members have been saying for years,” states ACNM President Holly Kennedy, CNM, PhD, FACNM, FAAN. “As health care reform is implemented, midwives must be utilized to the full extent of their education and training so that we can meet the health care needs of the public. The time is now to take action on this report.”

In 2008, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the IOM launched a two-year initiative to study the need to assess and transform the nursing profession. The IOM appointed the multidisciplinary “Committee on the RWJF Initiative on the Future of Nursing at the IOM,” under the leadership of former U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, to develop an action-oriented blueprint for the future of the nursing profession in America. The committee’s October 2010 report highlights four key messages:

- Nurses should practice to the full extent of their education and training.
- Nurses should achieve higher levels of education and training through an improved education system that promotes seamless academic progression.
- Nurses should be full partners, with physicians and other healthcare professionals, in redesigning healthcare in the United States.
- Effective workforce planning and policy making require better data collection and an improved information infrastructure.

ACNM is particularly pleased by the report’s focus on the midwifery model of care and its positive effect on women and their birth outcomes. ACNM also appreciates the committee’s recommendation that hospital requirements for participation in Medicare be clarified to ensure that all advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) and midwives are eligible for clinical privileges, admitting privileges, and membership on medical staff.

Certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) in many states are recognized under state law as APRNs, a category often used to encompass nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists, certified nurse-midwives, and clinical nurse specialists. ACNM participates actively in numerous coalitions and affiliations to achieve greater autonomy and equity for all CNMs, certified midwives (CMs), and APRNs, and to eliminate the capricious barriers that prevent these qualified health professionals from serving the public.

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“Policymakers recognize the immediate need to increase access to quality and cost-effective primary care,” says ACNM Executive Director Lorrie Kline Kaplan, CAE. “These discussions often focus solely on the mathematical impossibility of bringing enough physicians into the workplace to fill this need.”

Kaplan continues, “Often overlooked is the fact that we have literally thousands of highly qualified health care professionals who are unable to practice to the full extent of their education. The IOM report notes that the evidence regarding the safety and effectiveness of the care provided by these professionals is overwhelming and describes the numerous antiquated state and federal laws and regulations blocking the way. It also describes the systems that reinforce turf battles and discrimination against entire groups of clinicians. We applaud Dr. Shalala and the IOM committee for their leadership in bringing visibility to these truths at this critical crossroads for health care in America.”

“Here are the solutions,” states Kennedy. “Do we have the collective will to implement them?”

For more details on the Future of Nursing report, see the following links:

IOM Press Release: <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health/Press-Release.aspx>.

Future of Nursing Report Brief: <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health/Report-Brief.aspx>.

The entire 620-page report can be downloaded for free as a PDF file or purchased as a print publication from the National Academies Press at [http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=12956](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12956).

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With roots dating to 1929, the American College of Nurse-Midwives is one of the oldest women's health care associations 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.

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