

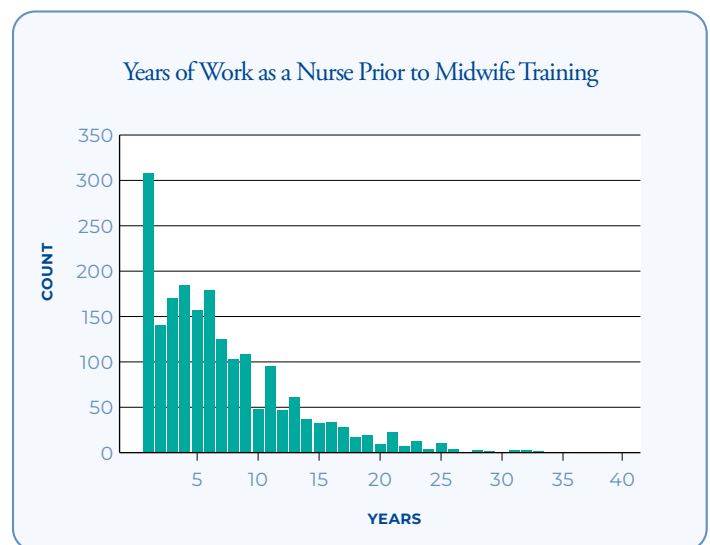
# How long do midwives work as nurses before starting midwifery education?

## ANALYSIS:

Data from the American Midwifery Certification Board were used to compare the number of years worked as a nurse prior to beginning midwifery education for those applying for the certified nurse-midwife credential in 2017 through 2019. Answers reported with a decimal were rounded up to the next whole number.

## RESULT:

Almost one-quarter of new certificants reported working for less than one year (22.6%); 15.5% reported never working as a nurse. Just under one-half of new certificants (48.4%) worked as a nurse for less than four years while 57.5% worked less than five years. Fewer than 20% of new certificants worked as a nurse for 10 years or more, though 22 (<1%) reported working as a nurse for 25 or more years.



## IMPLICATIONS

There are two pathways to advanced practice midwifery certification, the certified midwife, and the certified nurse-midwife pathways. Currently, most states require midwives to obtain certification as a nurse-midwife. Given that up to one-quarter of new midwives worked less than a year as a nurse, it appears that many educated as nurses to fulfill the requirements for the certified nurse-midwife pathway rather than due to a desire to be a nurse.

Colleges of Nursing turn away qualified applicants due to insufficient capacity. Increasing use of the certified midwife credential for licensure could help save prelicensure nurse training spots for individuals that intend to work as nurses and shorten the time to prepare new midwives for practice, especially for second degree students.