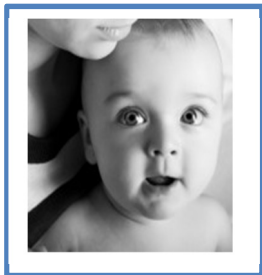


# Essential Facts about Home Birth



## The Women and Families of North Carolina Want Home Birth

Between 2004-2010, North Carolina experienced a greater than 40% increase in the number of women choosing home birth.<sup>1</sup> Demand is expected to continue to increase.

The challenge for legislators is to ensure that women have appropriate access to trained and licensed providers who can safely attend home births. Restrictive requirements for physician supervision unduly limit the number of midwives who can provide this service.

## Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNMs) are Safe Providers of Home Birth

CNMs must complete a formal education program accredited by the U.S. Department of Education, successfully complete a national certification exam in midwifery, and regularly recertify and complete continuing education.<sup>2</sup>

Regardless of the setting, all CNMs must adhere to ACNM's Standards for the Practice of Midwifery. These standards require that CNMs provide evidence-based care within a system that provides for consultation, collaborative management, or referral, as indicated by the health status of the client.<sup>3</sup>

## Evidence Confirms that Home Birth is Safe for Mothers and Babies

A meta-analysis of home birth outcomes conducted by the University of Pennsylvania found there was "no significant difference in maternal/neonatal/perinatal outcomes dependent on place of planned birth."<sup>4</sup>

An integrative review of 28 studies of home birth outcomes found "remarkable consistency" in the favorable outcomes reported for mothers and babies. The authors concluded that these results "should influence policy in support of planned home births" with skilled birth attendants.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Institute of Medicine, "An Update on Research Issues in the Assessment of Birth Settings: Workshop Summary," 2013.

<sup>2</sup> American College of Nurse-Midwives, "Midwifery Certification in the United States," March 2009.

<sup>3</sup> American College of Nurse-Midwives, "Standards for the Practice of Midwifery," September 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Katie Caldwell and Joetta Herrmann, "Decreased Labor Interventions with a Nurse Midwife and Planned Low Risk Home Birth," University of Pennsylvania, 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Judith Fullerton et al, "Outcomes of Planned Home Birth: An Integrative Review," *Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health* 52 (2007): 323-333.

