



# NACPM

national association of  
certified professional midwives

## CPMs: Midwifery Landscape and Future Directions

*A set of briefing papers and recommendations from NACPM* | OCTOBER 2017

### Introduction

**In the United States today, there is a critical and urgent need to make the benefits of midwifery care available to all families, regardless of means, in every state and every community.** NACPM envisions a primary maternity care system in our country where all women access care through a midwife, where birth place is the choice of the family, and where all women and babies have the same chance to be healthy. Dynamic new opportunities have emerged in recent years to grow our profession to truly meet the needs of the childbearing population. Whether it's addressing equity in the profession, achieving federal recognition and state licensure, or expanding reimbursement and employment opportunities—CPMs are on the move!

**As with all professions, change causes valid concern and worry—will our values be lost with professionalization?** NACPM believes that the changing landscape for CPMs holds great promise. Rather than being diminished by current changes, in fact, the opportunities for CPMs have never been greater: to serve more people, be more relevant to the changing needs and demographics of the childbearing population, be of more service in eliminating racial inequities in care, and infuse the systems of care with CPM knowledge, experience, and values! Imagine the day when half of all CPMs are people of color, aligning our profession with the changing demographics of the childbearing population. Imagine for a moment the day when CPMs across the country are able to provide care and receive payment for all people having babies who are covered by Medicaid, the Indian Health Service, military and other federal jobs, and other state- and federally-funded health care programs. Take a moment to imagine the day when there are accredited midwifery education programs accessible in every state, underwritten by public funds, with scholarships and other financial aid programs available to all students. NACPM is committed to supporting CPMs to position ourselves for this exciting future.

NACPM has prepared a series of briefing papers and recommendations, *Midwifery Landscape and Future Directions for CPMs*, designed to answer questions and engage midwives in further conversations about the future of the profession. The critical needs of childbearing people—and the urgency for CPMs to better meet these needs—drive the vision for the future of the profession described in these briefing papers. The very values embraced by midwives throughout history in the U.S. also motivated a new generation of midwives in the 1970s who emerged to serve people who were rediscovering and reclaiming normal birth and choosing to give birth at home. These are the same values that have defined the professionalization of CPMs. It is these values that continue to define and reflect our unique model of care, the credential, and the standards for education. NARM certification of midwives, MEAC educational program accreditation, and the professional standards of NACPM and MANA were created and are periodically updated through processes in which everyone's input is solicited. These building blocks of the profession are not separate from ourselves or imposed by others. In fact, they reflect, describe, and protect our values and our model of care.

**We encourage midwives and our allies to hold fast to our most important values,** understand and participate in the mechanisms of professionalization that will protect those values going forward, and embrace the incredible opportunities before us. We believe these briefing papers will be an important resource to midwifery study groups, state associations and NACPM chapters, midwifery schools and practices—anywhere that midwives are engaged in conversations about the future of the profession.

The papers are organized around three broad areas. First, we explore why CPMs matter to families and the health care system; how NACPMs vision and understanding of the landscape for CPMs informs our commitments; and our recommendations for midwives and students preparing for the future.

- » Certified Professional Midwives: What We Have Learned and Why Our Practice of Midwifery Is Critical to Improving Health & Saving Lives in the U.S.
- » NACPM Vision & National Landscape for CPMs
- » Preparing for the Future: Recommendations for Midwives and Students

Second, we report on the Midwives and Mothers in Action (MAMA) Campaign, a national effort led by NACPM, to achieve federal recognition of CPMs; how the strategy has changed and what that will mean for CPMs.

- » Federal Recognition: History and Current Strategy of the MAMA Campaign
- » Implications of Federal Recognition on Medicaid Reimbursement for CPMs
- » Examples of Provider Definitions in the Social Security Act

Third, we examine the important building blocks of the profession—certification, education, licensure, federal recognition, reimbursement, and employment—and how these both reflect and strengthen midwifery.

- » Certification and a National Credential
- » Education and Accreditation
- » Licensure and Regulation
- » Federal Recognition for CPMs
- » Reimbursement and Employment

We would like to thank our many colleagues who spent hours reviewing the briefing papers to be sure the information presented is accurate. Their comments often led us to think more deeply about certain issues and to improve our language to better reflect our values and commitments.

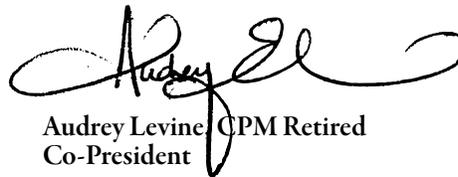
NACPM leaders are deeply committed to supporting a strong, robust CPM profession that is truly prepared to meet the needs of childbearing people in our country. We are eager to join with midwives around the country as we, working together, make well-informed, critical decisions about the future of midwifery.



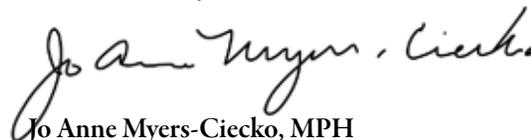
Mary Lawlor, CPM  
Executive Director



Tanya Khemet, CPM, MPH  
Co-President



Audrey Levine, CPM Retired  
Co-President



Jo Anne Myers-Ciecko, MPH  
Consultant to NACPM