

To: Barbara Graves, AMCB President
From: Holly Powell Kennedy, ACNM President
Date: January 12, 2011
Subject: Transition from lifetime to time-limited certification

As you are aware the ACNM Board of Directors met with 12 of ACNM's past presidents on January 10, 2011 to discuss concerns raised about the transition from lifetime to time-limited certification. This meeting is part of a larger effort of ACNM to understand how AMCB's decisions on this issue are affecting our members and to carefully consider how it will affect our organization and our profession. This meeting precedes a larger webinar that will be open to general membership to be held on February 7th from 6-8pm EST.

Mary Barger from AMCB listened in to the discussion and ACNM's legal counsel was also present. The past presidents were thoughtful, passionate, and in general quite aligned in their thoughts.

The following is a brief summary of the points made by the past presidents.

1. There was consensus that the decision of AMCB to move to time-limited certification for midwives in active clinical practice was appropriate and an important safeguard for the profession and public.
2. There was consensus that the current plan for the certification trademark of CNM-ret to be used by midwives who have left active clinical practice does not reflect other professional midwifery activities and is unacceptable. The majority preferred leaving CNM/CM intact for those who have received an initial certification and to develop a mechanism by which those enrolled in CMP can be recognized as certified for active clinical practice. The preference is that this designation should be available on the AMCB website for public access. Alternatively, CNM/CM with a suffix that indicates continuing certification for clinical practice (i.e. CNM/CM-BC or CNM/CM-C) could be considered.
3. There was consensus that the decisions made by AMCB on this issue will have important short- and long-term ramifications.

Short-term

- The decision about how the credential is used after a midwife's name that is certified by AMCB is critical to our professional identity and our membership organization. We face a potential loss of trust and actual membership in ACNM if our members do not believe a decision is achieved that addresses their concerns.
- It is essential that communication about future decisions to certificants and ACNM members is consistent and clear.

Long-term

- This transition actually represents an opportunity to reexamine how we present our profession to the public. This is occurring at a time when there will likely be a motion to amend our bylaws to change the name of the organization. As we consider this potential change we should use the process to guide a thoughtful and informed discussion to address 1) what we call our organization, 2) what we call midwives who belong to the organization and are certified by AMCB, and 3) how those changes will affect our professional autonomy.

We believe it is possible to reach a decision that will meet the needs of our members and will protect the credential. We also believe that it is in the best interest of both of our organizations to work through these transition issues together and we look forward to future discussions