

2018 ACNM Student Report

Thank you for the opportunity to present this report and to give our voice to the American College of Nurse-Midwives as students and student members. We thank the Savannah meeting planners and want to give a special shout-out for the hotel discounts for students and the welcome pages, which were requested in last year's student report and made us feel welcomed. We also wish to thank DeliverED Exam Prep for breakfast — we couldn't have written this report without coffee, eggs and hashbrowns.

Students and new midwives comprise 31% of the membership of the College. Our hope is that new students will continue to join at increasing rates, and that existing student members transition into new midwife members after graduation. We, as student liaisons, see ourselves as critical to making that change happen.

We recognize that ACNM is ardently working on issues that relate to themes identified through the student survey and want to acknowledge the following efforts already underway:

- Weaving anti-racism and diversity and inclusion into all levels of ACNM and midwifery work, including organizational representation, preceptor recruitment and workforce development
- Expanding technological interface and social media adaptability of all ACNM materials, trainings and information, and updating the ACNM website, specifically the student and new midwife pages
- Training on the topic of preceptorship, offering exemplars for practice, and working to expand preceptor access across the country
- Marketing the profession of nurse midwifery and educating consumers and related professionals about our scope of practice
- Enhancing the transparency of ACNM governance and student involvement in leadership, and releasing educational program data

We believe your work on all of these endeavors aligns with student priorities as expressed interests; and we are asking for a little bit more.

Students from more than half of the existing midwifery programs responded to the ACNM annual survey of student priorities. The following themes emerged from these responses: addressing racism, issues of diversity and inclusion throughout the organization and the midwifery profession, narrowing the student knowledge deficit about ACNM, providing clinical support to current students, and offering professional support to new graduates. We respectfully submit the following suggestions. We are lifting up our voices and we ask that you hear us.

Knowledge Deficit

As program representatives, we asked our cohorts the question, "What can the ACNM do for you?" The overwhelming response was, "I don't know." This is concerning because we recognize the importance that all midwifery students join the ACNM and understand its member benefits. We applaud the ACNM's progress in increasing

awareness of the college through the Our Moment of Truth Campaign, the student newsletter, opportunities like the SANMS and the SLCs, and social media presence. We believe the best way to engage future generations of midwives in the College is to increase student social media presence via student Twitter and Instagram accounts.

This year's theme is "Giving Voice": we agree that the best way to engage all members is to give them a voice. This effort includes midwives of color and student midwives, who both have a presence on the board but lack a vote. Students and new midwives comprise almost one third of membership, but lifetime retention is poor. As new midwives, students should have a place within each committee and affiliate, and they should have voting privileges. Students bring a fresh perspective on theory and clinical practice that is unique to being a student midwife. We also believe that if we have a say in the future of the College, we will be more involved in the ACNM and more likely to retain membership. The strides the ACNM has already made to decrease the knowledge deficit are invaluable to its progress, and we look forward to helping you make further steps.

New Grad Support

As students, we look forward to our future careers. We often wonder how our first year of practice will be and the support we will find. We recognize and appreciate the information on the ACNM new midwife page in regard to basic information on contracts and salaries. We believe that it would be helpful to have webinars on how to negotiate contracts and salaries, how to establish collaborative agreements, and how to apply and interview for that first midwifery job. It would be especially important to have experienced midwives leading and attending these webinars. This could provide an opportunity for midwives who have interviewed new grads to offer advice, and allow students to ask questions pertinent to this topic.

We understand that the job market for new graduate midwives is tough. Midwifery positions are sparse in some markets, and positions often require prior experience in the midwifery field. ACNM's encouragement to hire new midwives would be appreciated. One step to help new midwives in this predicament is to update the 2014 "Pearls of Midwifery," thereby helping new grads become well versed in marketing themselves in order to create new jobs.

We would also like to see ACNM take a position encouraging midwives and practices to have a strong orientation/mentoring program for those that are coming into their first midwifery position. We recognize that circumstances vary greatly, but it is important for the new midwife to feel like they are supported adequately during this transition to practice. ACNM could develop and offer a guide for new graduate onboarding that practices could use to frame their orientations. Such a guide would ideally include concrete suggestions about what new midwives need to feel supported and confident in their new roles. We appreciate your work on this and look forward to future help from the board.

Clinical Assistance

The shortage of midwifery preceptors is felt by students nationwide. In order to create the midwifery workforce that realizes the vision of midwifery care for all, we need ACNMs continued help in growing the number of active preceptors. We know ACNM is well aware of and working to address the challenges in this realm. We support the continued efforts of ACNM to build preceptor exemplars and help encourage more midwives to become preceptors. Suggestions for this work going forward include:

Building Connections

- A commitment to greater transparency and collaboration amongst program directors to support all students in need of clinical placement
- An ACNM-maintained list of all practices who accept students
- Building an ACNM connection platform for preceptors and preceptees to self-match

Support for New and Existing Preceptors

- An email from ACNM to new midwives after 1 year in practice, welcoming and inviting them to preceptorship
- Continued development of ACNM resources for midwives to advocate for the inclusion of students in their practice settings, including webinars and materials for practice directors
- ACNM membership discount and CEUs for preceptors

Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity in Clinical Learning

- A specific need is felt by students for an increased number of preceptors of color. The recent statement on racism was very meaningful for students, and we support all efforts by ACNM to increase the diversity of our profession, including the diversity of our preceptors and our students.
- We believe the creation and dissemination of additional module trainings for all preceptors on anti-racism and gender-inclusivity in clinical settings would be beneficial for preceptors and students.

We thank ACNM for the continued, ongoing work to support the future of midwifery by supporting preceptors and students. We appreciate the work that is ongoing in the effort to support students and grow the midwifery workforce. We ask you to consider our specific suggestions on matter.

Conclusion

These responses and the themes that emerged were based on responses from diverse student bodies from many programs across the country. We support the work being done and the efforts that are soon to emerge from ACNM. We ask that you take the interests and concerns of the student population into account as the board moves forward. We acknowledge that the board does not control the job market or the will of the employers, that the board cannot force midwives to precept students, and that increasing the knowledge held by students does not only fall on the shoulders of this body. However, we ask for your help in creating the best circumstances possible for the

students and new midwives to flourish. We encourage the wonderful, diverse audience of midwives here today to hear our report; take in our voices, ask yourself: can I help my students learn more about ACNM? Can I precept just one more student per year? Can I offer guidance and assistance to those transitioning into practice?

We charge everyone here with being a change agent in the interest of midwifery today and tomorrow. Today is a new day. We need to be the change we want future generations of midwives to be. In the interest of midwives, students, clients and their families we need to work together to ensure midwives are growing in number with increasing diversity, inclusivity, and confidence.

We thank the board for giving us the time to speak today. We thank the audience for listening and being here in support of ACNM. We are excited for the future and are honored to have all of you and ACNM as our midwifery community.

Respectfully submitted by,

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