

June 11, 2008

Via email to:

Roger.Brown@ama-assn.org

Craig W. Anderson, MD, Chair
AMA Reference Committee B, Legislation
c/o Roger Brown, PhD
Director, Office of House of Delegates Affairs
American Medical Association
515 N. State Street
Chicago, IL 60610

Re: American Medical Association (AMA) House of Delegates
Resolution 303 (A-08)

I am writing on behalf of the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) to urge the AMA House of Delegates to reject a portion of Resolution 303, scheduled for consideration at the House of Delegates' June 14-18 meeting.

ACNM is the national trade association representing certified nurse-midwives (CNMs)®, and certified midwives (CMs)®. The mission of ACNM is to promote the health and well-being of women and infants within their families and communities through the development and support of the profession of midwifery as practiced by CNMs and CMs.

Resolution # 303 (A-08)—regarding physician supervision of DNPs.

Our comments are directed at the portion of the resolution urging a policy that nurses with DNP degrees only be allowed to practice under physician supervision. Such a policy flatly fails to reflect the practice reality for our advanced practice nurse-midwife members in the vast majority of states. As certified nurse-midwives are licensed independent practitioners by operation of the laws and regulations in all but six states in the nation and, as such, are not required to be supervised by physicians, it is improper in the extreme to suggest that CNMs who have earned the high academic distinction of a doctorate in nursing practice and who currently are authorized to practice without physician supervision would suddenly have the structure of their

practice called into question despite CNMs' advanced education and training and established state law.

CNMs practice in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, CNMs attend over 11% of all vaginal births in the U.S. each year, 97% of which take place in hospitals. CNMs also provide well-woman and primary health care for women in all stages of life. Additionally, CNMs are highly educated; more than two-thirds of CNMs have earned a master's degree or higher. ACNM firmly believes in the value of advanced education; a minimum of a master's level degree will be required for entry into the profession starting in 2010.

It is axiomatic that questions as to structure of CNM practice should be the province of ACNM in conjunction with state regulatory authorities and state legislatures, and not rest with an organization representing other health care practitioners, such as the AMA. CNMs work collegially and well with physicians, and the AMA would be ill-advised to adopt policies which seek to alter those important relationships absent any showing that change is warranted.

Sincerely,

Joanna M. King, Esq.
State Policy Analyst

cc: Lorrie Kline Kaplan, ACNM Executive Director
Kitty Ernst, ACNM Board of Directors President