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Certified nurse-midwife

Certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) are health care providers who provide health care services for women, newborns, and families. CNMs have graduated from a midwifery education program accredited by the Accreditation Commission on Midwifery Education (ACME). Upon entering the program, applicants either already have a registered nurse (RN) license or they receive their RN license as part of their CNM training.

To receive certification, CNMs must pass a national certification exam administered by the American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB).

Certified midwives (CMs) receive the same training and certification as CNMs; however, they do not have an RN license. To maintain certification, both CMs and CNMs must pass recertification every 5 years.

CNMs can be licensed to practice in 50 states plus the District of Columbia and U.S. territories. CMs can be licensed in Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Virginia, Washington, and the District of Columbia.

This article focuses specifically on the role of CNMs.

SCOPE OF PRACTICE

CNMs are educated and trained to provide a broad range of health care services for women, newborns, and families. CNM functions include:

- Pregnancy, labor and delivery, and postpartum care
- Family planning and prescribing birth control
- Gynecological care
- Primary care for all stages of life, inclusive of all gender identities and sexual orientations
- Wellness checkups, health screenings, and vaccinations
- Prescribing medicines
- Ordering diagnostic tests
- Assisting physicians during surgery

PRACTICE SETTINGS

CNMs work in a variety of settings. These may include:

- Private offices
- Birth centers
- Homes
- Hospitals
- Health departments
- Community centers and public health systems
- Remote care delivery such as telehealth

REGULATION OF THE PROFESSION

CNMs are regulated at two different levels. Licensing occurs at the state level and falls under specific state laws. As with other advanced practice nurses, license requirements for CNMs vary from state to state. They follow the legal requirements of the state where they practice.

Certification is done through a national organization and all states have the same requirements for professional practice standards. Only graduates of nurse-midwifery programs accredited by the ACNM are eligible to take the certification exam given by the AMCB.

Alternative Names

Nurse midwife; CNM

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