

Maternal/child health policy change - The making of student midwife advocates

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PRESENTATION FORMAT: Oral Presentation

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Maternal and child health, federal health policy, advocacy, midwifery, students

ABSTRACT:

20 percent of births are attended by midwives in Oregon, significantly higher than the 8 percent national average. Midwives cost the health care system less, and provide consistently high level care with excellent outcomes. There are many federal and state health policy initiatives that would improve access to the high-quality maternity and women's health care services provided by midwives. Midwives and midwifery students in Oregon and around the country are involved in advocacy efforts to promote state and federal health policy and regulatory change. The Oregon Affiliate of the American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM) holds a Lobby Day in Salem each year. Midwives and student midwives in Oregon advocate for health policy initiatives relevant at the state and local level. On May 5 2016, the ACNM Advocacy and Government Affairs Department in partnership with the Georgetown University Federal Relations Department, held an inaugural experiential learning activity in Washington D.C., facilitating "Federal Capitol Hill Visits" for 30 graduate students and faculty from around the country (including Oregon) in Georgetown University's online distance midwifery program. The students were also able to present their advocacy experiences the same day to participants around the world during the Student Cafe of the Virtual International Day of the Midwife, recording of this event is available here: <https://c.deic.dk/p4wiyilfoy6/>

This presentation will discuss current health policy initiatives of interest to maternal/child health and midwifery in Oregon and nationally, as well as recent state and federal advocacy activities of midwives and midwifery students in Salem and Washington D.C.. Participants will have the opportunity to critically evaluate and analyze the effectiveness of these activities in terms of both their potential effect on health policy as well as on the creation of maternal/child health care new-graduate providers that are actively engaged in health policy and advocacy efforts.

OBJECTIVE(S):

- Identify current federal and state maternal/child health policy initiatives that are being promoted by midwives in Oregon and nationally.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of an experiential health policy advocacy learning activity for student midwives at Georgetown University's online distance program.
- Formulate next steps for federal, state, and local maternal/child health policy and regulatory change in order to improve access to care that reduces costs and improves quality and outcomes.

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