Direct-Entry Midwifery Education

Midwifery Education Accreditation Council
May 2008
Direct-Entry Midwifery Education Milestones

1970s:

- The “grand midwives” and the “new midwives”
- The Farm and “Spiritual Midwifery”
- Elizabeth Davis, “Heart and Hands” and other resources supporting self-study and apprenticeship
- Shari Daniels and the El Paso birth centers
- Feminist Women’s Health Movement and the Seattle Midwifery School
Direct-Entry Midwifery Education Milestones

1980s:

• MANA founded, goals include “promoting education”
• Midwifery skills workshops held to inspire and support apprenticeship and new midwives
• Several new schools established in states like Florida, California, and Texas
• MANA adopts core competencies
• Carnegie Foundation invites nurse-midwives and direct-entry midwives to national meetings on midwifery education
Direct-Entry Midwifery Education Milestones

• **MEAC founded in 1991**

• NARM adopts standards for certification in 1994

• MEAC adopts standards for accreditation in 1994

• Maternidad la Luz is the first school accredited by MEAC in 1995

• PEW Foundation convenes Task Force on the Future of Midwifery in 1999
Task Force on the Future of Midwifery

Recommendations included:

• State legislatures should enact laws that base entry-to-practice standards on successful completion of accredited education programs, or the equivalent, and national certification.

• The profession should recognize and acknowledge the benefits of teaching the midwifery model of care in a variety of education programs and affirm the value of competency-based education in all midwifery programs.

• The midwifery profession should identify, develop and implement mechanisms to recruit student populations that more closely reflect the U.S. population and include cultural competence concepts in basic and continuing education programs.
Direct-Entry Midwifery Education Milestones

• MEAC recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education in 2001

• American Public Health Association adopts resolution calling for increased access to out-of-hospital maternity care services in 2001
Celebrating USDE recognition!
Recommendations include:

• Increase access to out-of-hospital maternity care services and increase the range of quality maternity care choices available to consumers, through recognition that legally-regulated and nationally certified direct-entry midwives can serve clients desiring safe, planned, out-of-hospital maternity care services.

• Develop and implement guidelines for the licensing, certification and practice for direct-entry midwifery practitioners for use by state and local health agencies, health planners, maternity care providers, and professional organizations.
American Public Health Association

Recommendations include:

• Increase cost effective maternal care services for rural and underserved urban populations by advocating for increases in funding of scholarships and loan repayment programs targeted at members of these communities.

• Public and private insurance plans should eliminate barriers to the reimbursement and equitable payment of direct-entry midwifery services in both public and private payment systems.
American Public Health Association

Recommendations include:

- Congress and DHHS should increase funding and other support for ongoing research and evaluation of maternal health and birth outcomes, practice outcomes, quality of care outcomes, and safety related to the services provided by direct-entry midwives.
What is accreditation?

- The goal of accreditation is to ensure that education provided by institutions of higher education meets acceptable levels of quality.

- Accreditation in the United States involves non-governmental entities as well as governmental agencies.
US Department of Education (USED)

MEAC

State agencies that regulate postsecondary education

Other accrediting agencies
What is accreditation?


- Accrediting agencies, which are private educational associations of regional or national scope, develop evaluation criteria and conduct peer evaluations to assess whether or not those criteria are met.

- Institutions and/or programs that request an agency's evaluation and that meet an agency's criteria are then "accredited" by that agency.
What is the value of accreditation?

• To improve the quality of the program thru a process of self-evaluation and feedback from other educators

• To assure graduates will meet requirements for national certification by NARM

• To hold educational programs accountable to their peers, their students, and the public

• To be able to participate in federally-funded student financial aid programs
MEAC Philosophy on Midwifery Education

• Should be based on principles of the midwifery model of care

• Midwives should be primary teachers

• There is wisdom in diverse models of education ~ there should be varied, available and accessible routes of entry

• All educational routes should culminate in mastery of core competencies which meet a national standard
MEAC Philosophy on Midwifery Education

- Mastery of MANA CC is the reference for all evaluation methods.
- Mastery of CC can be accomplished through various educational routes, including conventional classroom, distance learning, apprenticeship and universities without walls.
- Mastery of CC is not limited by the length of time spent in the educational process.
- Evaluation methods should be culturally unbiased.
Scope of USDE Recognition

- Degree-granting institutions
- Non-degree granting institutions
- Programs within accredited institutions
- Distance learning
Scope of USDE Recognition

- Degree-granting institutions
  - Birthingway College of Midwifery
  - Midwives College of Utah
  - National College of Midwifery
NCM Office
Scope of USDE Recognition

- Non-degree granting institutions
  - Birthwise School of Midwifery
  - Florida School of Traditional Midwifery
  - Maternidad la Luz
  - National Midwifery Institute
  - Seattle Midwifery School
Birthwise Administrative Staff
Maternidad la Luz
Scope of USDE Recognition

✓ Programs within accredited institutions

Midwifery Program at Miami-Dade College

Midwifery Program at Bastyr University
MDC Health Sciences Library: Midwifery Books on Display
Scope of USDE Recognition

✓ Distance learning

MCU, NCM, and NMI courses all taught via distance education methods.

SMS employs a low-residency model, combining internet and classroom-based instruction.

All schools, except MLL, rely primarily or exclusively on external preceptors for clinical instruction.
Schools certified for Title IV Financial Aid Programs

• *Birthwise School of Midwifery*

• *Birthingway College of Midwifery*

• *Seattle Midwifery School*
MEAC Standards

I. Success with respect to mission

II. Curricula

III. Faculty

IV. Facilities, equipment, supplies and other resources

V. Fiscal and administrative capacity
MEAC Standards

VI. Student support services

VII. Student affairs

VIII. Measures of program length and the objectives of the degrees or credentials offered

IX. Record of student complaints

X. Compliance with the institution’s responsibilities under Title IV of the Higher Education Act
Curriculum

- Midwives Model of Care
- MANA Core Competencies
- NARM Experience and Other Requirements
- NARM Skills Checklist
MEAC Accreditation Process

- Preliminary application; must provide evidence of ownership, state authorization, curriculum

- Self-Evaluation Report (SER) prepared by school to document how standards are met

- Accreditation Review Team reviews SER and conducts site visit and prepares report
Reviewing a Self-Evaluation Report
The Site Visit

- Two+ days, ARC members with AS support
- Audit student, faculty, administrative and curriculum files
- Interview program director, faculty, students and graduates
Interviewing MDC Program Director
Interviewing MLL Director
Auditing NCM student files
Touring MLL facility: Student rest/work area
Observing NCM Class
Visiting MDC Learning Resource Center
Touring MLL Facility: Student Computer Stations
Interviewing MDC Graduates
Preparing MDC report
MEAC Accreditation Process

- Accreditation decisions are made by the MEAC Board of Directors

- Possible accreditation decisions made by MEAC Board: grant, defer, or deny accreditation

- Entire process, from preliminary application thru board decision, takes approximately two years.
Maintaining MEAC Accreditation

- Schools must submit annual reports and sustaining fees every year

- Schools must notify MEAC and/or receive prior approval for substantive changes

- Schools must submit Interim Reports if required by the Board

- A review can also be triggered by an action taken by another accrediting agency or state regulatory body
Maintaining MEAC Accreditation

If information gleaned from these sources indicate that a school may not be in compliance with MEAC standard, the Board may take the following actions: show cause, suspension, revocation, denial or withdrawal of accreditation.
MEAC participates in international gatherings of midwifery educators
ICM Western Regional Conference, Trinidad, 2004
MEAC has assisted the creation of the Association of Midwifery Educators
Founding Meeting, Baltimore, MD, October 2007
But most importantly, MEAC supports the future of midwifery by assuring quality education!