

Midwifery Care: Intervention, Cost, and Satisfaction

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Abstract

- The practice of midwifery is utilized all over the world. Many countries use midwives as the main care provider for women throughout their pregnancy and through labor and birth.
- This research project will focus on the concept of midwifery in the U.S. It will specifically explore the value that a Certified Nurse Midwife can provide to the pregnancy and laboring/delivery process.
- It will look at interventions used, the cost of care, and patient satisfaction for certified nurse midwife-led care versus obstetrician-led care.

Research Concern

According to Sandall (2013), the philosophy of midwifery care is “normality, continuity of care and being cared for by a known, trusted midwife during labor. The emphasis is on the natural ability of women to experience birth with minimum intervention” (p. 2). This study explores certified nurse midwife-led care from the perspective of three research questions:

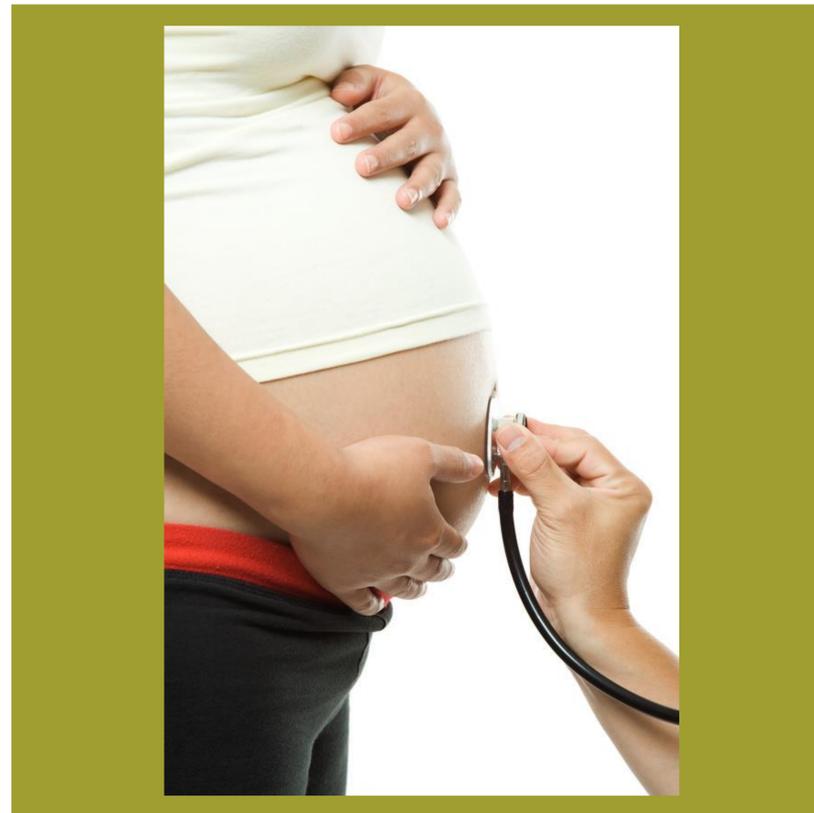
- Do certified nurse midwives perform less interventions leading to better health care outcomes for mother and baby?
- Does care led by certified nurse midwives provide for less expensive maternity care?
- Does certified nurse midwifery care encourage a better emotional experience for the mother?

Definition of Terms

- **Nurse midwife:** “a registered nurse with additional training as a midwife who delivers infants and provides prenatal and postpartum care, newborn care, and some routine care of women” (Nurse-midwife, n.d.).
- **Interventions:** anything extra added to a normal, natural labor such as induction of labor, amniotomy, episiotomy, forceps or vacuum delivery, or cesarean section (“Childbirth”, 2011).
- **Low risk pregnancy:** absence of any of the following - existing health conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure, carrying more than one fetus, or being a teen or older than 35 (“What is a high risk pregnancy”, 2013).

Methods

- Mixed-method systematic review of qualitative and quantitative studies.
- Used the database EBSCOhost.
- Started with 25 research articles and used the 9 that answered the research questions.



Significance

- This literature review can benefit many people wanting to know more about the care given by a certified nurse midwife, such as:
 - Certified Nurse Midwives
 - Prospective certified nurse midwife students
 - Obstetricians looking to collaborate with a certified nurse midwife
 - Women looking for a care provider

Results

- The research has found that care provided by a certified nurse midwife indicates less interventions will be used during labor and delivery of a low risk mother.
- The main interventions that are used less often with nurse midwife care versus physician led care are amniotomy, episiotomy, instrument delivery with forceps or vacuum, analgesia and anesthesia (Sutcliffe et al, 2012; Sandall, 2013; Nijagal & Wice, 2012).
- Outcomes that are improved with midwife-led care are decreased chance of fetal death before 24 weeks gestations and decreased chance of preterm labor (Sandall, 2013).
- An important outcome to mention is that there is an increased likelihood of spontaneous vaginal delivery with a certified nurse midwife versus a physician (Sutcliffe et al, 2012; Sandall, 2013; Nijagal & Wice, 2012).
- There are multiple studies looked at (Sandall, 2013; Paul et al, 2013; Sutcliffe et al, 2012) that indicate there are trends toward money saving benefits to midwifery care.
- All of the surveys did stated that there was increased satisfaction with their care when they had a certified nurse midwife.
- Patients were happy with the amount of time the certified nurse midwife would spend with them at appointments, the information given and the attitude of the care provider (Paul et al, 2013; Sutcliffe et al, 2012; Sandall, 2013)

Conclusions

- Nurse-midwives use less interventions and have the same or better outcomes for “low risk” maternal and neonatal patients as physicians.
- Care received from a nurse-midwife may be less expensive, but needs further research.
- Patients also have a better emotional experience when they have a nurse midwife because they take the time to answer questions and empower their patients.

While these are only three small parts of midwifery care, they show obvious benefits to choosing a certified nurse midwife as a care provider for low risk pregnancy.