

Nurse Midwife

■ Job Description

For centuries, women have looked to midwives to advise and assist them in childbirth. Today's certified nurse midwife (CNM) carries on this tradition of personal, family-centered, understanding care. Responsibilities include prenatal care, labor and delivery management, postpartum care, well-woman gynecology, and normal newborn care. Although CNMs independently manage the care of healthy women and newborns, each CNM is affiliated with a physician who is available for consultation or referral if needed.

■ Job Settings

Approximately 5,700 certified nurse-midwives practice in all fifty states. About 290 CNMs work in Illinois, mostly in the Chicago area. They typically work in hospitals, birthing centers, health maintenance organizations (HMOs), public health departments, clinics, and private practice. Some CNMs also conduct deliveries in the home.

■ Projected Need

Nationally, the number of jobs for registered nurses is expected to increase faster than average through 2010. In Illinois, registered nurse is one of the 10 occupations expected to provide the most job openings each year.

Because of the increased awareness among medical professionals and the public regarding nurse midwifery, there is an increased need for nurses trained in this area. Also, the care provided by nurse-midwives costs substantially less than the care provided by obstetricians and gynecologists making it more cost effective.

■ Salaries

Earnings vary widely and depend on such factors as place of employment, scope of practice, education, and experience.

According to the Year 2000 Survey of Registered Nurses in Illinois, 59% of the nurse midwives surveyed reported earning between \$50,000 and \$75,000 per year.

■ Related Careers

Family planning, international and public health, maternal and child health, and medicine

■ Differences in Training

Currently, 47 major colleges and universities nationwide offer either certificates or master's degrees in nurse midwifery. Nurse midwifery education is focused in two areas: (1) providing care to healthy women and their infants and (2) recognizing significant deviations from the norm that require intervention by a specialist. In addition to the required classroom work, the programs include a strong clinical component, often one-on-one with an experienced CNM, designed to develop the skills needed to translate knowledge into practice. Individual programs may also include research, administration, or public health classes. The only program in Illinois is available through the University of Illinois at Chicago.

■ Related Educational Programs

The programs of study listed below are the recommended areas of study to pursue for this occupation. Clicking on these will lead to files that show in-state and national schools that offer these programs.

The following link(s) will take you to CIS for more information. CIS requires an ID and password that can be obtained at <http://cis.ilworkinfo.com/loginhelp/> You must log into CIS prior to clicking on the links below.

[Nurse Midwifery](#)
[Registered Nursing](#)

■ Credentials

Certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) are registered nurses who have graduated from an accredited nurse-midwifery education program and have passed a national certification exam administered by the American College of Nurse Midwives.

Certified midwives (CMs) are individuals who have a background in a health related field other than nursing and graduate from an accredited midwifery education program. Graduates of accredited programs take the same national certification exam

as CNMs but receive the professional designation of certified midwife.

■ **Advanced Training**

Midwifery is an advanced practice role in nursing. To enter a master's program in nurse-midwifery, an individual must be licensed as an RN and have a baccalaureate degree.

■ **Resources**

American College of Nurse Midwives
818 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20006
Phone: 202.728.9860
<http://www.midwife.org>
Click on "Education" then select "A Career in Midwifery."

Scholarships are available to students enrolled in a basic midwifery education program who are members of the American College of Nurse Midwives.