

National College of Midwifery Equity Statement

Elizabeth Gilmore founded NCM as a larger expression of her conviction, "We must remove barriers to midwifery education in order to improve outcomes for mothers and babies." Now we are more aware than ever of how maternal health outcomes among certain populations are affected by poverty, lack of services, cultural isolation, institutional racism and oppression.

NCM consciously considers how internal, self-mediated and institutional oppression is experienced based on race, color, national or ethnic origin, ability, religion, marital status, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, economic status, formal education, language, citizenship status, veteran status, genetic and/or ancestry information, political affiliation and other characteristics.

We believe that the Midwives Model of Care© when delivered with an equity consciousness and a culturally versatile approach holds the potential to undo systemic discrimination and oppression within our maternity healthcare systems and in turn bridge the health disparities experienced by so many. We understand that bringing this potential to reality starts with our own commitment to the continual, lifelong effort of actively dismantling internal, self-mediated and institutional racism and oppression.

NCM takes seriously its responsibility in this realm and commits to:

- Protecting the apprenticeship model and creating opportunities for midwifery students to choose their own preceptors while remaining in their communities so that they can learn and serve within their unique cultural contexts.
- Continually working to increase access to midwifery education for all aspiring midwives. This includes maintaining an active scholarship program which opens opportunities for students who originate from and/or identify culturally with populations affected by institutional racism/discrimination as they relate to maternity care and who hold the intention to serve these populations as midwives.
- Engaging in ongoing examination and revision of our internal practices, policies and procedures (including recruitment of students, admissions and hiring of staff and faculty) to ensure that they genuinely reflect an ethic of equity and a commitment to social justice.
- Creating a College culture in which all students, preceptors and staff have an experience of feeling heard, respected, represented and included.
- Maintaining a staff structure that eliminates hierarchy and encourages equality, consensus building, cooperation and self responsibility.
- Ensuring that all staff is working with a lens of equity and inclusivity by providing ongoing education, including anti-racism training to all staff members.
- Continually updating NCM's written materials to ensure that inclusive language is used and that birth justice and equity themes are woven through the curriculum.
- Teaching midwifery students to offer compassionate and effective care across cultural differences, to engage in healing from racism and discrimination and to work towards dismantling internalized, personally mediated and institutionalized racism and oppression.
- Ensuring that the delivery and assessment methods used in NCM's curriculum are versatile and inclusive of different viewpoints and ways of knowing.

- Creating methods to use student assessment data to improve the versatility and inclusivity of the delivery and assessment methods of our curriculum.
- Providing training to all of our preceptors and students in dismantling and healing from racism and discrimination. This includes education and self reflective exercises woven through all aspects of the curriculum that relate to implicit bias, privilege, health disparities, social determinants of health, history of midwifery from various perspectives, midwifery practices within diverse cultural contexts, and other themes of inclusivity.
- Providing guidance and support for healthy student preceptor relationships including training in nonviolent communication, anti-discrimination and anti-bullying policies.
- Intentionally making connections with, supporting and learning from other individuals and organizations involved in birth justice work, thus taking an active role in the birth justice movement.