



POSITION STATEMENT

Access to Obstetric Newborn Services

- Whereas: There is every indication that Freestanding Birth Centers, whether operated by midwives, hospitals or physicians; for profit or not for profit, will become a widely-accepted community health care facility, and
- Whereas: It is critical to the health and safety of the childbearing public that they be established as low cost, low risk ambulatory facilities that are part of the health care and hospital system of the community, and
- Whereas: The Freestanding Birth Center requires a joint practice relationship between obstetric/neonatal specialists and nurse-midwives and/or family practice physicians, and
- Whereas: The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American College of Nurse-Midwives have adopted a joint statement of Practice Relationships between the two professions which recommends "access to practice within the hospital setting", and
- Whereas: Interdependent and shared facility and client services have been agreed upon between hospitals and birth centers through mutually drafted policies and procedures for referral and transfer, or through physician and/or midwife staff privileges, and
- Whereas: Each profession and each facility assumes responsibility for setting standards for their own practice and institution, for implementing quality assurance through a review process, for providing individual professional malpractice insurance; therefore...

Be It Resolved That: In order to assure the safety of the childbearing public choosing care in the freestanding birth center, the American Association of Birth Centers recommends that physician consultants and hospital obstetric newborn services assure access to acute care services without discrimination. This assurance may be provided through the customary mechanism of physician and/or midwife staff practice privileges or through mutually drafted policies and procedures concerning referral or transfer of clients from one facility to another.

Approved by AABC Board of Directors: 11.11.1983