Background

- Midwives are the backbone of maternal-infant care across the globe.
- There are over 11,000 CNMs in the USA.
- Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNMs) are known to give care that is as good or better than that of other obstetrical providers (Ratcliffe, 2002).
- Higher rates of uncomplicated vaginal deliveries, breastfeeding success, and patient satisfaction are associated with midwifery care (Johnson & Davis, 2005).
- There are ~490 CNMs in the state of Texas (Resident Births, 2011).
- Little is known about the nature and scope of nurse midwifery care – particularly to the underserved populations in Texas.
- The purpose of this research was to understand the scope and nature of the practice environment surrounding CNMs in Texas.

Research Questions

- What is the nature of the practice environment?
- What are the key legislative issues?
- What is the current market place value?
- What factors have been most influential in practice success?
- What are the greatest barriers to practice?

Sample

All nurse-midwives in the state of Texas certified through the American Midwifery Certification Board (n=490)
- English-speaking
- Computer access

Baylor University Institutional Review Board approved (H717761-1)

Methods

ONLINE SURVEY
- Online Survey adapted for use in this study (Hastings-Tolsma et al, 2014)
- Survey piloted (N=15)
- Email containing a URL link to the survey sent to Texas CNMs
- Survey available for 3 weeks with 2 reminder emails
- Survey administered through REDCap data management system

SURVEY explored 8 areas of interest (160 items)
- Demographics/Background
- Employment Profile
- Clinical Practices
- Practice Leadership
- Consultation/Credentialing/Liability
- Prescriptive Authority
- Teaching Students
- Practice Satisfaction/Future Trends

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW of a subset of CNMs (N=8)
- Individual performed via telephone/mobile device
- 45 minutes or less in length
- Questions explored: barriers to successful midwifery practice, legislative concerns, strategies to promote midwifery practice
- Transcribed, analyzed for themes using open source coding

Results

Response Rate: 33%

Demographics
- 92% white
- Nearly 1/3 are over 55 years of age (29.3%)
- 64.5% are employed full time in midwifery
- 21.3% work in a hospital/medical center setting
- Well over half (53.6%) care for vulnerable and underserved populations

Key Survey Findings
- 38.4% of CNMs practice in large urban settings
- 19.4% care for 20 or more patients in a clinic day
- Most midwives (76%) care for low to moderate risk patients
- Most midwifery practices consult with 1 or more physicians (78.8%)
- 22.1% of CNMs do not carry professional liability insurance
- CNMs teach a wide variety of students (nurse practitioner, midwifery, basic, medical)
- Most (80.5%) teach midwifery students less than 25% of the time
- Few (4.3%) believe midwifery should be under the Board of Nursing

Top legislative priorities:
- Independent prescriptive authority (77%)
- Hospital admitting privileges (51.1%)
- Elimination of physician supervisory language in hospital bylaws (52.5%)

Future of Midwifery
- Nearly half (43.9%) believe they have the ability to influence health care in Texas
- Majority (58.3%) positive about midwifery in the state of Texas

Qualitative Interviews: 5 Themes

- Practice Leadership
- Consultation/Credentialing/Liability
- Prescriptive Authority
- Teaching Students
- Practice Satisfaction/Future Trends

Implications

- Texas CNMs reflect an aging workforce with a crisis looming as retirement nears
- Strategies to increase midwifery pipeline numbers are needed
- Texas is one of the fastest growing states in the nation with large numbers of vulnerable and medically underserved. Barriers to midwifery practice exacerbate access to healthcare problems.
- Strategies to encourage midwifery practice in medically underserved areas are needed.
- CNMs do not reflect the ethnic diversity of Texas which is a “majority-minority” state.

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