

primary health care is discontinued when their health insurance coverage ends. Women's health care has historically been neglected by the health care system outside of the maternity cycle. The New York Health Act would make women's health, including care for post-menopausal women who represent a large number of women without health insurance coverage, a priority and enable women to access primary care providers, including midwives, to maximize their health and well-being going forward and, if desired, enter their next pregnancy healthy thereby improving their pregnancy outcomes and preventing pregnancy related deaths and pregnancy related near deaths.

More and more women of color who are the consumers of women's reproductive health care in public hospital systems where most midwives work are asking for midwifery care and midwives who look like them. The New York Health Act would expand women's access to midwives. Midwives are experts in holistic health care with vast experience across all birth settings from home birth and birth center to large tertiary academic medical centers. At a time when access to abortion services is under threat, midwives were included in The New York State Reproductive Health Act which codified Roe Protections into New York State Law, decriminalized abortion care and included midwives and Advanced Practice Clinicians (APC) as Providers. Physician language was removed, and midwives and APC's practice will be determined by their scope of practice and training.

Substantial evidence exists that documents the benefits to all women of midwifery care.

The Lancet is the world's leading independent general medical journal international in focus that extends to all aspects of human health. The Lancet is stringently edited and peer-reviewed to ensure the scientific merit and clinical relevance of its diverse content. It's very difficult to be published in The Lancet with only 5% of submitted manuscripts accepted for publication in the Lancet family of nine general medicine specialty journals. Research published in The Lancet is considered ethical and credible.

The Lancet published a series on midwifery in 2014 titled, **The Lancet Series on Midwifery: An**

Overview. Included in the section titled, **Relevance and Key Findings,** is the following:

The Series found that "midwifery matters more than ever" because of the ability of midwives to save and improve the lives of women and children around the time of pregnancy. The Series demonstrates how the normalization of childbirth provided by midwifery, coupled with collegial, inter-professional collaboration results in impressive outcomes. Despite the availability in the United States of the most technologically sophisticated and comprehensive medical resources, outcomes for both women and children rank close to the bottom of almost all developed countries. The Series on Midwifery provides a fresh, holistic framework with technical evidence to position midwifery and midwives as central to improving the care of childbearing women globally. (3)

The Cochrane Review is a systematic review of research in health care and health policy that is published in the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews. *Cochrane Reviews* are internationally recognized as the highest standard in evidence-based health care and is published online in the Cochrane Library. The review, *Ways to help pregnant women avoid preterm birth*, states the following:

What is the issue?

Preterm birth, or being born before 37 weeks of pregnancy, is a major reason why newborns die and may also mean long-term disability for surviving infants. There are many ways healthcare providers try

to prevent women from having their babies too early. Pregnant women may be encouraged to take vitamins, reduce smoking, take medicines for infections or attend regular healthcare visits. Our overview looks at different ways (or interventions) to prevent preterm birth. We searched for relevant papers in the Cochrane Library on 2 November 2017.

Outcome: Preterm Birth

Clear benefit

We were confident that the following interventions were able to help specific populations of pregnant women avoid giving birth early: **midwife-led continuity models of care versus other models of care for all women**; screening for lower genital tract infections; and zinc supplementation for pregnant women without systemic illness. Cervical stitch (cerclage) was of benefit only for women at high risk of preterm birth and with singleton pregnancy. (4)

PLOS One is a peer-reviewed open access scientific journal published by the Public Library of Science (PLOS) since 2006. The journal covers primary research from any discipline within science and medicine.

Mapping Integration of Midwives Across the United States: Impact on Access, Equity, and Outcomes, published in 2018 found the following:

Research suggests that integration of midwives into regional health systems is a key determinant of optimal maternal-newborn outcomes that might change outcomes for mothers and babies. States that integrated midwives into their health systems experienced lower rates of premature births, neonatal mortality and Cesarean Section. (5)

In summary, The New York Health Act would increase health equity for women and families enabling them to address issues of reproductive justice, birth equity, health disparities, maternal and infant morbidity and mortality and primary care through increased access to midwives at a time when hospitals are closing their maternity services in rural areas and the availability of women's reproductive health care providers are decreasing.

Thank You.

(1) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services • Centers for Disease Control and Prevention • National Center for Health Statistics. Table A-11a. [Summary Health Statistics Tables for U.S. Adults: National Health Interview Survey, 2017, Table A-11c.pdf icon\[PDF – 133 KB\]](#)

(2) [Health Insurance Coverage: Early Release of Estimates From the National Health Interview Survey, 2017, table VII.pdf icon\[PDF – 530 KB\]](#)

(3) Accessed 5-26-2019. http://www.midwife.org/acnm/files/cclibrary/files/Filename/000000004314/Lancet_Series_Highlights.pdf.

(4) Accessed 5-26-2019. https://www.cochrane.org/CD012505/PREG_ways-help-pregnant-women-avoid-preterm-birth.

(5) Accessed 5-26-2019. <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0192523>.