

Legislative Agenda 2024

- **Support Our Bill: SB 6178** is a technical fix adding Licensed Midwives (LM) to pharmacy statute to clarify LM prescriptive authority. It will firmly resolve prescribing issues from the past, such as acceptance of prenatal vitamin prescriptions, and it will also smooth the way for new prescribing.
- **Support the Governor's Budget item** that creates a grant program to improve access to maternity care. The \$2,375,000 can be used for capital expenses for new or recently completed licensed birth centers or small rural hospitals.
- Thank legislators for their support of the **budget proviso capping our annual licensing fee** at \$525. This is already in the current budget.
 - Since this cap was put in place, the licensed midwife workforce has more than doubled, resulting in more families in Washington having access to high-quality, cost-effective care that result in even greater savings to the state budget.
- **Planting Seeds:**
 - Families who choose Licensed Midwives for their care consistently ask to receive their well-person care between pregnancies from them as well. They know they can get a pap smear or be screened for a mood disorder, for example, at their 6 week postpartum visit and they would like that option throughout their childbearing years
 - If LMs could **offer the same care to their clients between pregnancies that they offer during pregnancy and postpartum**, the benefits for health and for the healthcare system would be even greater, reducing costs and increasing access to high quality care.
 - Future **budget support of data collection**
 - Data entry is a time consuming & financial burden for small practices who are required to submit by law
 - Funding for data entry & to cover the costs of participating could alleviate this cost & burden
 - The public benefits from data collection that drives quality improvement
- Other Bills we Support:
 - **HB 1889** Qualified midwives who want to obtain a professional license to serve families in WA should be able to do so regardless of immigration or citizenship status.
 - **HB 2350/SB 6172** Doulas are well poised to serve their communities and offer high quality culturally sensitive care. This bill will set their reimbursement rate and support their professional licensing and credentialing processes.
 - The doula bills died, so the desired changes are being sought in the Supplemental Budget.
 - **HB 1655/SB 6161** Addresses inflationary costs for small health clinics, requiring health carriers to annually adjust the compensation offered to health care providers not employed by hospitals in an amount that reflects inflationary cost increases
 - Unfortunately these bills died.

References

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WA MMR report

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Seattle Times 2/27/23: Black, Native infants in King County die at higher rate than white babies

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