PLANNING AND RESOURCES FOR MIDWIFERY AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SYSTEMS

BACKGROUND
Planning for health resources is not only a technical process, but also a political one, as decisions on the number; types and distribution of resources depend on the political choices and values enshrined in the organization of national health systems. Health planners and decision makers have to ensure that the right number and types of resources are at the right place at the right time to deliver health services for the population needs, at an affordable cost. This should take into consideration pregnancy and childbirth are normal physiological processes, yet profound experiences, which carry significant meaning to the woman, her family and the community (ICM Philosophy and Model of Midwifery Care (2005)).

POSITION
The ICM believes that midwives are pivotal to improved women, maternal and newborn health outcomes for individuals, families and communities through the provision of competent, culturally sensitive, evidence-based midwifery and reproductive health care. It further believes that through their close association with women and their families, midwives are in a unique position to know the reality of their healthcare needs and to identify the resources required for the provision of quality services, in consultation with women. Within a country, midwives should therefore be represented at all levels where policies and strategic plans are being developed to address issues concerned with the reproductive health of women, but especially those linked to the achievement in reduction of newborn, child and maternal morbidity and mortality. Midwives based in clinical settings should be involved in the decision making process applied to the allocation of limited financial resources for their service at local and national level.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Member Associations are urged to:

- encourage governments, healthcare agencies and non-governmental organizations to accept this position statement as the basis for their own decision-making process
- strive to achieve an equitable distribution of those resources, so as to address the needs of most women seeking or requiring care
- ensure that their members participate in politics of their country
- ensure that their members are aware of the cost of care
- advocate for appropriate midwifery and reproductive health services

RELATED ICM DOCUMENTS
ICM Definition of the Midwife (2011)
ICM Philosophy and Model of Midwifery Care (2005)

OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS
WHA Accelerating access to primary health care, including health system strengthening; 62.1212 Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery; WHA 54.12

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