

March 25, 1980

SB 1829

INFORMATION PAPER ON
THE PROFESSIONAL MIDWIFERY PRACTICE ACT OF 1980

Summary Capsule

SB 1829 provides for the licensure of professional midwives through a committee organized under the control of the Board of Medical Quality Assurance. Professional midwives could practice in consultation with physicians in normal childbirth cases, but must refer all abnormalities or complications to a physician. Professional midwives would be trained through a three or four year program of formal education, training, and supervised residency programs. Professional midwives would be eligible for Medi-Cal payments and hospital privileges (if under a physician's supervision).

Introduction

SB 1829 is a carefully drafted legislative initiative that draws upon the cumulative experience of other states and nations in midwifery licensure. The bill provides a professional expert in normal childbirth as an alternative childbirth care provider to complement the existing resources in meeting women's demands for alternative maternity care services in California. This bill represents the input of doctors, nurse midwives, lay midwives, nurses, childbirth educators, scholars, government administrators, hospital administrators, and mothers from many California communities.

The critical maternity care question facing the health care industry today is whether a woman and her family have the right to decide the manner and style in which she gives birth to their baby. SB 1829 demonstrates that the health care community can be truly responsive in providing alternatives that meet community maternity care needs in a competent and safe fashion.

The bill establishes the important role that professional midwives can play as maternity care providers in California.

SB 1829 creates a medically-safe approach to broadening the scope of maternal care available in California by allowing a woman and her family to choose among several methods of childbirth. This expanded range of choices, including doctors, hospitals, midwives, clinics, homes, and other alternative childbirth practices, expands for the woman and her family critical control over the most fulfilling and natural expression of a family-centered culture -- the birth of children.

The health care and consumer agencies in the Administration developed this legislative initiative and extend their support to this important bill. SB 1829 is carried by Senator Barry Keene.

*We are
still
waiting
for this
to happen!*