

Community midwifery stands as a beacon of hope

Βικτωρία Βιβιλάκη¹, Αγγελική Μπάκου¹, Ζηνοβία Πλυτά²

¹ Τμήμα Μαιευτικής, Πανεπιστήμιο Δυτικής Αττικής, Αθήνα, Ελλάδα

² Εργαστήριο Τοξικολογίας και Εγκληματολογικής Χημείας, Ιατρική Σχολή Πανεπιστημίου Κρήτης, Ηράκλειο, Ελλάδα

ΣΥΓΓΡΑΦΕΑΣ ΕΠΙΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑΣ

Βικτωρία Βιβιλάκη. Τμήμα Μαιευτικής, Πανεπιστήμιο Δυτικής Αττικής, Αγ. Σπυρίδωνος 28, 12243, Αιγάλεω, Αθήνα, Ελλάδα.

Email: vvivilaki@uniwa.gr

KEYWORDS

midwifery, healthcare community, public health, maternal, newborn health

Υποβλήθηκε: 15 Ιουνίου 2023, **Εγκρίθηκε:** 23 Ιουνίου 2023

GREEK EDITORIAL ABSTRACT

Η κοινοτική μαιευτική αποτελεί σημαντικό παράγοντα βελτιστοποίησης της ποιότητας της περιγεννητικής μαιευτικής φροντίδας. Οι κοινοτικές μαιέες ως σημαντικοί επιστήμονες υγείας φέρουν τις υπηρεσίες υγείας κοντά στο σπίτι και συμβάλουν στην βελτίωση των ποσοστών μητρικού θλασμού, την μείωση της επιλόχειας καταθλιπτικής συμπτωματολογίας, και μειώνουν το στίγμα για την περιγεννητική ψυχική νοσηρότητα. Επίσης, ενισχύει το σύστημα υγείας, ιδίως σε αγροτικές περιοχές με περιορισμένους πόρους. Η κοινοτική μαιευτική προσφέρει μια παραδειγματική αλλαγή στη μαιευτική φροντίδα, τοποθετώντας τις μαιέες στην πρωτοπορία της αλλαγής του υγειονομικού περιβάλλοντος. Η κεντρική έμφαση αφορά στην γυναίκα και την οικογένεια της, αναγνωρίζοντας το σημαντικό τους ρόλο στην προαγωγή μηνυμάτων αγωγής υγείας και στη δημιουργία μιας κοινωνίας όπου κάθε γυναίκα λαμβάνει τη φροντίδα που αξίζει.

ENGLISH EDITORIAL

Community midwifery empowers midwives and changes the delivery of maternity care. Because they are at the forefront of community healthcare, midwives are crucial role models who have altered the maternal health scene. This editorial emphasizes the relevance of community midwifery in empowering midwives and improving the quality of care delivered to pregnant mothers and their newborns.

Community midwifery is important in mother and infant healthcare because it provides a continuum of care during pregnancy, labor, and the postpartum period (Zephyrin et al, 2021). It also enhances the health system, particularly in rural regions with limited resources (Shikuku et al, 2020).

The community midwifery approach assures access to vital maternity and newborn health care while also maximizing service usage. Effective communication is critical in community midwives' dual roles in maternity and public health (Shikuku et al, 2020). Furthermore, community midwives help to improve maternal healthcare usage by providing vaccines, family planning services, and encouraging health-seeking behavior (Salam et al,

2014). They are also in charge of restoring trust, offering complete and compassionate maternity care, and advising on family planning. Overall, community midwifery has an important role in improving mother and newborn health outcomes, strengthening the health system, and encouraging community health-seeking behavior (Shikuku et al, 2020).

Through many techniques, community midwifery has the potential to greatly enhance maternal and newborn health outcomes. For starters, community midwives provide care throughout normal pregnancy, labor, and the postpartum period, resulting in superior health outcomes for both women and newborns (Tabbassam et al, 2015). Second, the use of community midwives can enhance the health system, particularly in underserved rural areas, improving maternal and newborn health outcomes. Third, community midwifery services increase skilled attendance in the provision of maternity and newborn healthcare in the community, contributing to improved health outcomes (Musaddiq, 2023). Additionally, community midwives play an important role in restoring trust, offering thorough and respectful maternity care, and advising on family planning, all of which improve maternal and infant health outcomes. Furthermore, community midwifery services improve access to and usage of maternal and newborn health services, ultimately improving health outcomes (Siddiqui, 2022). Finally, compared to alternative maternity models, midwife-led maternity care is related with greater rates of vaginal delivery, lower rates of C-sections, fewer preterm births, and fewer low-birthweight children, thereby enhancing maternity care outcomes. In conclusion, community midwifery can significantly improve mother and newborn health outcomes through its continuum of care, health system strengthening, promotion of competent attendance, trust-building, greater access to treatment, and enhanced maternity care.

Empowering midwives and transforming healthcare

Community midwifery is a strong platform for midwives to realize their full potential and put their knowledge to use. Midwives have the chance to make strong connections

with women in the community setting, creating trust and delivering customized, compassionate care throughout the reproductive journey. Midwives are empowered to use their substantial knowledge, skills, and experience in this paradigm, guaranteeing thorough and holistic care for their clients. Community midwifery, by embracing a woman-centered approach, amplifies midwives' voices, acknowledging their critical role as advocates for safe and respectful delivery experiences (Zephyrin et al, 2021).

The contribution of community midwifery to the transformation of maternity care cannot be emphasized. This strategy enables the provision of a continuum of care, from pregnancy through the postpartum period, ensuring women and their families get seamless and complete assistance. Midwives in the community become pillars of strength, guiding and enabling women to make educated decisions, supporting healthy lives, and ensuring safe delivery experiences (Shikuku et al, 2020). Community midwifery supports the health system by bridging the gap between healthcare institutions and communities, particularly in disadvantaged rural regions where access to excellent maternity care remains a difficulty.

In addition, community midwifery acts as a catalyst for improved health outcomes. Midwives, equipped with their knowledge and abilities, treat problems and risk factors in a timely and effective way, lowering maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality (Zephyrin et al, 2021). Midwives can help to avoid and treat complications by recognizing and acting early, safeguarding mothers' and newborns' health and well-being. Furthermore, community midwifery empowers women through promoting breastfeeding, vaccinations, and family planning, therefore shaping healthier futures for both women and their communities.

Finally, community midwifery offers a paradigm change in maternity care, putting midwives at the forefront of changing the healthcare environment. Community midwifery facilitates the delivery of woman-centered care by empowering midwives and acknowledging their skills, while also encouraging trust, compassion, and respect. Community midwifery enhances health systems, increases access to treatment, and promotes favorable health outcomes through a continuum of care close to the home (Salam et al, 2014). Let us stand together in our resolve to elevate midwives, acknowledging their important role in fostering healthier generations and building a society where every woman receives the care she deserves as we advocate for the value of community midwifery.

REFERENCES

1. Zephyrin L, Seervai S, Lewis C, Jodie G, Katon JG. Community-Based Models to Improve Maternal Health Outcomes and Promote Health Equity. The Commonwealth Fund. March 4, 2021. Accessed June 13, 2023. <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/issue-briefs/2021/mar/community-models-improve-maternal>

outcomes-equity

2. Shikuku DN, Tanui G, Wabomba M et al. The effect of the community midwifery model on maternal and newborn health service utilization and outcomes in Busia County of Kenya: a quasi-experimental study. *BMC Pregnancy Childbirth*. 2020;20(1):708. doi:[10.1186/s12884-020-03405-w](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12884-020-03405-w)
3. Salam RA, Lassi ZS, Das JK, Bhutta ZA. Evidence from district level inputs to improve quality of care for maternal and newborn health: interventions and findings. *Reprod Health*. 2014;11(2). doi:[10.1186/1742-4755-11-S2-S3](https://doi.org/10.1186/1742-4755-11-S2-S3)
4. Tabbassam HF, Menhas R. A Co-relational Study of Community Midwife and Maternal Health Care System: A Questionnaire Survey in Rural Areas of Pakistan. *Iran J Public Health*. 2015;44(1):140-141.
5. Musaddiq, T. The impact of community midwives on maternal healthcare utilization. *Health Econ*. 2023;32(3):697-714. doi:[10.1002/hec.4640](https://doi.org/10.1002/hec.4640)
6. Siddiqui D, Ali TS. The importance of community midwives in Pakistan: Looking at existing evidence and their need during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Midwifery*. 2022;106:103242. doi:[10.1016/j.midw.2021.103242](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.midw.2021.103242)

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors have completed and submitted an ICMJE Form for Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest and none was reported.