



CIMS Coalition for Improving Maternity Services

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Maternal-Child Health Experts Reveal Best Practice is also Mother-Friendly

Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida- A low-tech, woman-centered approach to maternity and newborn care is safest and meets women's needs. That startling conclusion comes out of the significant findings of a Coalition for Improving Maternity Services (CIMS) research project. The commissioned research project findings will be presented at CIMS Fourth Annual Childbirth Forum and Meeting February 23-25, 2006 at the Radisson Hotel Boston.

Keynote speaker, Dr. Christiane Northrup, a nationally recognized pioneer in the field of women's health and wellness and *New York Times* best-selling author will explore the childbirth experience and the mother-daughter bond. Dr. Northrup, a board certified obstetrician/gynecologist will speak from her latest book, *Mother-Daughter Wisdom: Creating a Legacy of Physical and Emotional Health* (Bantam 2005). The book explores how and why the mother-daughter bond is at the headwaters of a woman's health. In the fall of 2005, *Mother-Daughter Wisdom* was nominated for the prestigious Quill Award.

Dr. Michelle R. Lauria co-founder of the Vermont/New Hampshire VBAC Project will present the successful efforts of a voluntary consortium of 35 hospitals and more than 200 health care professionals in the region that support women who want to labor for a VBAC. Concerned that in a three-year period about 50% of the hospitals in New Hampshire and Vermont stopped offering VBAC as an option for pregnant women, but encouraged that 98% of providers surveyed wanted to offer this option to their patients, Dr. Lauria of Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center and members of this collaborative project developed VBAC risk-based protocols that provide safe medical care and encourage shared decision making that meet women's needs. The VBAC project received national recognition and their leadership was awarded the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists annual With Award.

CIMS is pleased to present the results of a systematic review of the science that supports the Ten Steps of the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative (MFCI) an evidence-based, woman-centered consensus model of maternity care. This model reflects the US Department of Health and Human Services' Healthy People 2010 goals to improve the health status of mothers, infants, and children. "The MFCI is universal," stated, Henci Goer, Project Manager of the

Expert Work Group. “Many documents addressing maternity care reform contain the same elements as those found in the MFCI, and none contradict it. These include the World Health Organization’s *Care in Normal Birth: A Practical Guide*; the synopsis of the Cochrane Database’s systematic reviews *A Guide to Effective Care in Pregnancy and Childbirth*; the Midwives Model of Care; Lamaze International’s Principles of Normal Birth; and the Royal College of Midwives’ Campaign for Normal Birth.

Health professionals supportive of safe alternatives to hospital births will have the opportunity to hear Dr. Steven Guy and Teresa Krummen, RN speak about the success of the Family Beginnings Birth Center an accredited birth center at a Level III hospital and from Alan Huber, Certified Financial Planner about successful and profitable birth centers and midwifery practices in the US.

The Coalition for Improving Maternity Services (CIMS), a United Nations recognized NGO, is a collaborative effort of numerous individuals, leading researchers, and more than 50 organizations representing over 90,000 members. Promoting a wellness model of maternity care that will improve birth outcomes and substantially reduce costs; CIMS developed the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative in 1996. A consensus document that has been recognized as an important model for improving the healthcare and well being of children beginning at birth, the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative has been translated into several languages and is gaining support around the world.

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