



## **Midwifery Licensure Program**

### ***December 2016***

The Midwifery Program assures licensed midwives are safe to practice. Activities of the program include issuing licenses and establishing licensure qualifications, requirements relating to obtaining and administering drugs, and other rules specified in RCW 18.50. The program also investigates complaints and takes action against licenses for unprofessional conduct.

In addition, the Midwifery Advisory Committee meets four times per year to advise and make recommendations on issues including, but not limited to, continuing education, mandatory reexamination, and peer review. The Department also asks for their advice on practice issues relating to midwifery complaints. Committee members receive travel reimbursement but are not paid for their time.

Due to the statutory provision that the midwifery program must be self supporting through licensure and renewal fees, the Department of Health increased the renewal fees from \$450 to \$950 in 2002. The program had between 115 and 120 actively licensed midwives when the increase took effect. Within one year, the number of licensed midwives plummeted to fewer than 100 and continued to decline thereafter.

The Midwives Association of Washington State (MAWS) approached the Legislature in 2006 seeking a subsidy for this program and it was granted. MAWS continued to make this request in subsequent years. Therefore, the program has been subsidized by general fund money since FY 07, allowing the fees to return to prior levels.

In FY 08, the Legislature also provided an appropriation for an evaluation of the economic benefits to the state's health care system of the midwifery licensure and regulatory program under chapter 18.50.RCW. In particular, a consultant was to conduct a review of existing research literature on whether these economic benefits exceed the state expenditures to subsidize the cost of the midwifery licensing and regulatory program under RCW 43.70.250. The report concluded that the economic benefits of the midwifery program to the State of Washington exceed the costs of operating the Program.

### ***Services***

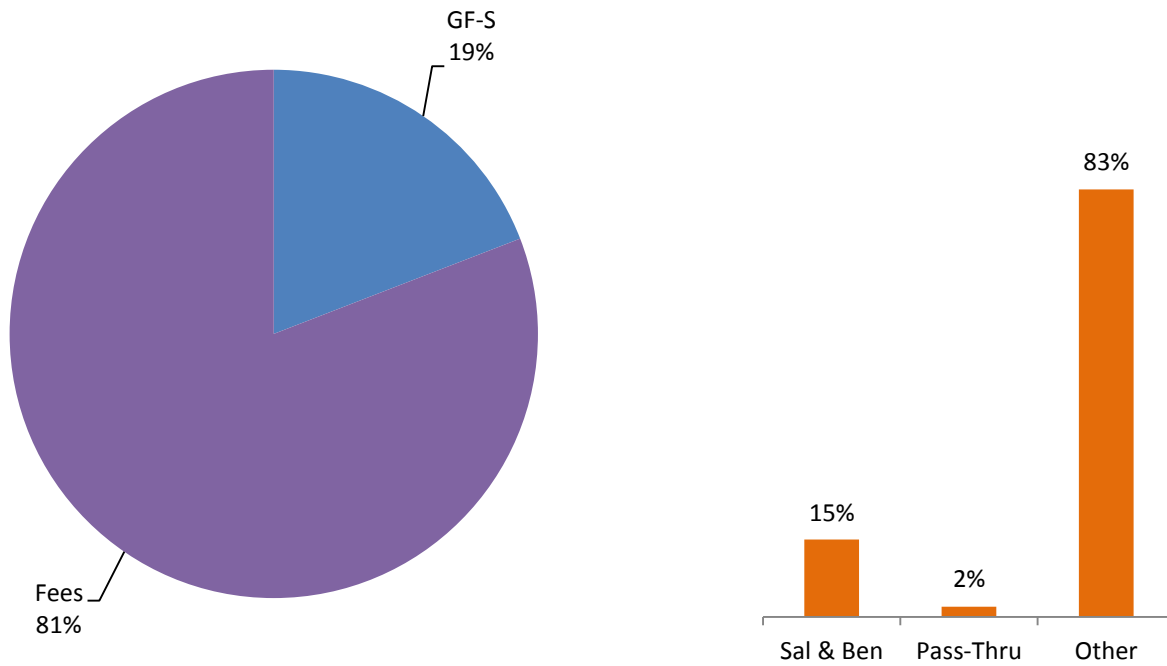
- Review licensure applications to determine entry level requirements are met. This includes examination administration. Issue and renew licenses.
- Review and investigate complaints of unprofessional conduct against licensed midwives.
- Take disciplinary action against midwives when complaints show unprofessional conduct.
- Establish rules for requirements of licensure, education, standards of practice, fees and other program related issues that require rules.
- Convene the Midwifery Advisory Committee four times per year.

### ***Stakeholders***

- Clients of midwifery services.
- Licensed Midwives.
- Midwives Association of Washington State.
- Washington Alliance for Responsible Midwifery.

**2015-17 Biennium**

**Midwifery Licensure Program Fiscal Information**



	GF-S	Federal	Dedicated	Fees	Total	Sal & Ben	Pass-Thru	Other
Total	130,000	0	0	564,000	694,000	101,000	12,000	581,000

**Recent Funding History**

**2015-17 biennium:**

- Midwifery was appropriated \$130,000 in GF-S

**2013-15 biennium:**

- Midwifery was appropriated \$130,000 in GF-S.

**2011-13 biennium:**

- Midwifery was appropriated \$115,000 in GF-S.