



International Confederation of Midwives

PRESS RELEASE

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Working for midwives worldwide: The International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) & its 26th Triennial Congress

The President and Board of Management of the ICM are delighted to join with the Austrian Midwives Association in welcoming midwives to the 26th Triennial International Congress, in Vienna, Austria, April 14-18 2002. They are committed to the Congress theme of 'Midwives and women together for the family of the world' and will take an active part in the Congress events.

During and before the Congress week, the ICM will be holding meetings of its governing body, the International Council, of its Executive Committee and its Board of Management. ICM representatives will also facilitate workshops on topical issues open to the Congress participants.

Since its establishment in 1919, the ICM has been holding regular congresses with the purpose of bringing midwives together across national boundaries to exchange knowledge and information. These aims have been further developed as the Confederation extends its activities. The ICM Mission Statement is to:

'... advance world-wide the aims and aspirations of midwives in the attainment of improved outcomes for women in their childbearing years, their newborn and their families wherever they reside'.

More specific objectives are to develop: the role of the midwife as a practitioner in her own right; a model and philosophy of midwifery care; and a framework for midwifery regulation and legislation. Issues affecting the health of women and newborns, such as smoking during pregnancy, and the increase in rate of Caesarean section, are addressed.

- ICM supports and advises associations of midwives in liaison with their governments, and represents midwifery to the international bodies and agencies in meetings, consultations and in direct relationships with heads or governing bodies of such organisations.
- The Confederation works actively with other international organisations towards the goals of the Safe Motherhood Initiative, aiming at reducing the large number of deaths of women from pregnancy-related causes, currently over 500,000 per year.
- The ICM encourages and assists midwives in developing leadership skills, through meetings and workshop sessions; in constructing educational curricula relevant to local situations; and in promoting midwifery both in the international health field and via the media.

All members of the Confederation are either independent associations of midwives or midwives' groups within other organisations. There are currently 83 midwifery associations from over 70 countries in membership with ICM.

For further information contact ICM headquarters or visit the website www.internationalmidwives.org