

To: Smith, Austin
Subject: Fwd: Safety of South Carolina Birthing Mothers

DHEC request

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Dana Patterson <halos_glow@msn.com>
Date: December 10, 2015 at 7:36:11 AM EST
To: <ashtonlee@gov.sc.gov>
Subject: Safety of South Carolina Birthing Mothers

Dear Madam Governor,

It was a blessing to have the opportunity to speak to you last night at the SCGOP Christmas Party. I was very encouraged by your interest in the safety of birthing women in SC and how DHEC is overstepping their bounds.

I know your time is valuable, so I will be as brief as possible, however, I would be happy to provide more detailed information at your request.

Earlier in the year, I was privileged to attend a House Committee hearing on H3851 where a stay was granted. DHEC was not happy with decision and they are instead seeking to impose regulations, some of which were contained within H3851, that could inhibit the safety of birthing women in the state. The current law/regulations are to stay in place until 2016, when new legislation is introduced (H4393).

At their meeting scheduled for today (12/10/15), DHEC has a Proposed Amendment of Regulation 61-24 (Licensed Midwives) on the agenda. There are 4 main points of concern within this regulation. The first is that a midwife cannot administer cytotec to a mother after birth. While cytotec can be a dangerous drug for induction (and is not used by midwives), it is a valuable drug to help stop a potentially life threatening postpartum hemorrhage. In addition to this, the use of pitocin for a hemorrhage would be dangerously restricted under the proposed regulations. The second concerning regulation states that only an OB with admitting privileges can provide a risk assessment for a pregnant mother. Currently, any physician can provide this and the regulation change could result in a low-risk mother being denied a midwifery assisted birth if her local OB is opposed to midwifery care. The third point is that care must be transferred if a woman's pregnancy reaches 41 weeks instead of the current 42 weeks. A normal, full-term pregnancy, is defined as one that results in delivery between the 38th and 42nd week. There are variables that can affect the length of gestation as a baby may need another week to grow or the EDD (estimated due date) is inaccurate. The last point is that VBAC (vaginal birth after cesarean) could not be attended by a midwife, especially in a home or birth center setting (that is not under a hospital). VBAC is a safe option for healthy, low risk mothers who should be allowed the opportunity to choose a birth with midwifery care.

Governor, I am not a midwife, but as a doula and mother, I have had the privilege of working

with OB's, Family Physicians, and Midwives. I have seen the love and care that a midwife gives to her clients, and they truly have the very best interest of the pregnant mother and her baby at the forefront of their plans and actions. It is my understanding that the DHEC Regulation Committee who governs midwifery in SC does not include Certified Midwives as part of their advisory panel. The states in the US with the most outstanding midwifery laws have instated a Midwifery Advisory Council, that includes midwives, who help to govern and establish safe midwifery practices in the state.

It is the desire of many in our state to see that healthy, low risk, pregnant mothers can make educated decisions for the birth that they deem both safe and desirable. I truly believe that it starts with making sure that DHEC is not seeking to go above the current legislation and then we should seek to model our midwifery regulations after the states with safe and healthy practices in place within a Midwifery Advisory Council.

I know there are many pressing issues in the state, but this one that truly deserves attention. A mother will remember her birth experience for the rest of her life and each mother and baby deserves a birth that is safe, healthy, and memorable. Today, we are seeking to stop DHEC from making regulations that ignore the current the current legislation.

Thank you for the taking the time to read about this concerning issue. If I can offer additional information to you, please feel free to contact me.

Many Blessings,

Dana Patterson

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