

PushNews from The Big Push for Midwives Campaign

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Viral Internet Campaign Exposes Bogus Research on the “Problem” of Increased Demand for Midwife Care Thousands of Activists Nationwide Force Physician Group to Scrub Its Website

WASHINGTON, D.C. (August 31, 2009)—In under 18 hours, a viral internet campaign targeted at the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) forced the group to take down a public [plea](#) asking its members to submit anecdotal, anonymous data about patients who planned out-of-hospital deliveries. According to the request, which was originally linked from ACOG’s home page, the professional trade association for OB/GYNs is “concerned” about the “problem” of growing numbers of women seeking out-of-hospital maternity care.

“Just follow the money,” said Steff Hedenkamp of The Big Push for Midwives Campaign. “ACOG does not want to continue losing patients to Certified Professional Midwives and out-of-hospital birth, so they’re telling members to send in more of the same old tall tales that far too many OBs love to scare women with. Well, we have news for ACOG—it’s not working.”

The campaign to expose the physician group’s plans began on Facebook and Twitter and rapidly drew thousands of women to ACOG’s website, where they submitted their own data about their healthy deliveries in private homes and in freestanding birth centers throughout the country. In response, ACOG moved quickly to scrub its website and placed its request for unsourced data from members behind a password-protected firewall.

“This was almost as fun as last year’s [campaign](#) pressuring the American Medical Association to back off from its ridiculous claim that Ricki Lake is responsible for the increase in out-of-hospital deliveries,” said Sabrina McIntyre, mother of two. “The AMA and ACOG seem to forget that women are capable of making rational, informed decisions about our maternity care providers and birth settings. We don’t appreciate fear-mongering tactics meant to try and scare us away from using safe and cost-effective, community-based alternatives to our current maternity care system.”

Analysts familiar with ACOG expect the group to use the anecdotal data collected from members to support its ongoing state and federal lobbying campaigns aimed at denying women access to out-of-hospital maternity care and Certified Professional Midwives, who are specially trained to provide it. “ACOG admits in its own [documents](#) that they’ve been forced to use ‘hardball tactics’ against women who are advocating for choices in maternity care,” said Hedenkamp. “Frankly, this latest stunt of theirs to troll for ‘fresh’ folklore reeks of desperation.”

The Big Push for Midwives Campaign represents thousands of grassroots advocates in the United States who support expanding access to Certified Professional Midwives and out-of-hospital maternity care. The mission of The Big Push includes educating national policymakers about the reduced costs and improved outcomes associated with out-of-hospital birth and advocating for including the services of Certified Professional Midwives in health care reform. Media inquiries: Katherine Prown (414) 550-8025, katie@thebigpushformidwives.org

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