

AABC and CABC - Two Distinct Organizations

The American Association of Birth Centers (AABC) and the Commission for the Accreditation of Birth Centers (CABC), although now separate, are historically connected and work closely in many arenas. CABC was founded in 1985 as a result of almost a decade of work by the Maternity Center Association/National Association of Childbearing Centers (now AABC). This chart compares the two organizations as they are today.



Commission for the Accreditation of Birth Centers (CABC)

TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

Membership and trade organization for established and developing birth centers and other individuals, agencies and institutions that support the birth center model of care and the national AABC Standards for Birth Centers.

Independent accreditation organization for developing and existing birth centers. CABC is the only accrediting body devoted exclusively to birth centers, whose site visitors are specifically trained to conduct a site visit in a birth center; and whose review panels have first-hand knowledge of the philosophy, clinical care and operation of birth centers.

GOVERNANCE

Board of Directors are volunteers, elected from AABC membership.
Committees are made of volunteer members.

Board of Commissioners are volunteers, elected by sitting commissioners.
This diverse group of individuals fill specific pre-defined expert positions, representing midwifery, obstetrics, pediatrics/neonatology, birth center administration, parents and more.
Decision Panels are made of 2-3 commissioners.

PROMOTES

Birth center model with a focus on excellence in care and operations.

Birth center accreditation as confirmation of excellence in care and operations.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Advocates and lobbies in legislative efforts that affect birth centers, including written or oral testimony when states are reviewing or writing birth centers regulations.

Educates legislative representatives about CABC accreditation and provides written assessments of birth center regulations in comparison to the CABC accreditation process. Prohibited from lobbying.



Commission for the Accreditation of Birth Centers (CABC)

EDUCATION FOR BIRTH CENTERS

How to Start a Birth Center Workshop is a comprehensive 2-day workshop offered all across the USA throughout the year.

AABC Birth Institute is an annual convention offering clinical and administrative education sessions for birth center providers and administrators.

Webinar Wednesday is a monthly webinar program providing members with timely education on a variety of topics.

Technical and educational support while moving through the accreditation process, beginning with the **Reach for Excellence** training accreditation.

PROVIDES THE PUBLIC WITH...

- Directory to find birth centers.
- Explanation of “what is a birth center?” in concept, values and principles, and legal terms.

- Assurance that a particular birth center has undergone review and meets certain criteria for safety and quality.
- Verification of CABC accreditation.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE NATIONAL AABC STANDARDS FOR BIRTH CENTERS

The Standards for Birth Centers are developed and maintained by AABC, and **AABC owns the Standards.**

The AABC Standards were developed in 1985 by a task force of birth center and supportive perinatal care experts. This was done because of recognition by birth center pioneers that an infrastructure of standards, licensure and accreditation was essential for the development, acceptance, and credibility of the birth center model within the health care system.

The AABC Standards Committee reviews the standards periodically and at the request of AABC members, CABC, or other interested parties.

CABC has elected to use the AABC Standards for Birth Centers as the basis for its accreditation process, although it has no mandate to do so.

While CABC could develop its own standards or elect to use standards developed by another organization, CABC chooses to use the AABC Standards because they are:

- Based upon the best available evidence
- Developed and maintained by people who know and support birth centers
- Currently the only established national standards for birth centers

Type of Non-Profit

501c6

501c3

Why are the AABC and CABC separate?

It is important that the accrediting body be independent from the trade organization in order to assure the public, payers, and policymakers that the accreditation process is robust and objective.

This eventual separation of the two organizations was part of the plan from the formation of the CABC. The history of CABC and AABC is similar to that of Joint Commission, which had its roots in the American College of Surgeons (ACS), which first created a hospital accreditation program. The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals (JCAH) was created when the ACS joined with The American College of Physicians, the American Hospital Association, the American Medical Association, and the Canadian Medical Association to form an independent, not-for-profit organization whose primary purpose was to provide voluntary accreditation.

About the AABC Standards for Birth Centers

The AABC Standards for Birth Centers have withstood the test of time and much of what we know about the safety and good outcomes in birth centers is based upon the model of care reflected in these standards.

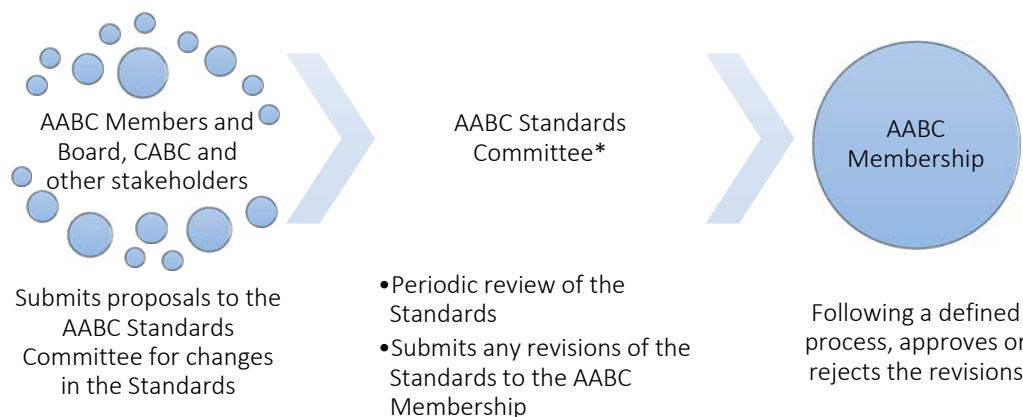
Changes to these tested standards should be made carefully and based upon the best available scientific evidence.

Standards are, intentionally, very broad guidelines, and as such, are not sufficient for CABC “on the ground” in evaluating quality in a birth center.

Consequently, CABC (as well as all accrediting organizations) has developed detailed performance indicators for measuring how well the standards are being met.



Revision Process for the AABC Standards



* The Standards Committee is chaired by an AABC board member and composed of representatives of AABC (6) and CABC (maximum 3). All members of the AABC Standards Committee must be members of AABC.

About the CABC Indicators

The *CABC Indicators for Compliance with the Standards* started out as an internal document created to provide necessary guidance for site visitors and decision panels to use during the accreditation process. This document helps to determine the degree to which each birth center is adhering to the AABC Standards, as well as requirements and recommendations for improvement when indicated.

In recent years it has become a public document in alignment with the CABC's dedication to organization transparency and education. Register here to get the most current CABC Indicators and alerts about updates:

<https://www.birthcenteraccreditation.org/go/get-cabc-indicators/>



Revision Process for the CABC Indicators



The development and revision process for the CABC Indicators also helps to identify aspects of the AABC Standards needing improvement for greater clarity or updating to align with current evidence.

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