

BIRTHING CENTERS

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1. The approval of a birthing center will be made only when it is demonstrated that the accessibility to adequate obstetrical and gynecological services in the applicant's geographical service area are limited and/or there are special circumstances which require additional services.
2. A specific service area should be identified and all existing providers of obstetrical services in that service area should be identified. Service area shall mean the county or counties represented by the applicant as the reasonable area to which the facility intends to provide services and/or in which the majority of the service recipients reside. The service area should be based on an optimal balance between population density and service proximity.
3. The female population aged 15-44 in the service area should be identified. The current year's population and the population four years hence should be used.
4. The relationship of the socio-demographics of the service area and the projected population to receive services should be considered. The proposal's sensitivity to and responsiveness to the special needs of the service area should be considered, including the accessibility to consumers, particularly women, racial and ethnic minorities, and low-income consumers.
5. The applicant must identify the existing facilities providing obstetrical services in the service area and their utilization.
6. The applicant must indicate the distance and approximate travel time that patients in need of emergency obstetrical services would have to travel to the nearest acute care facility to receive emergency care.
7. The applicant must indicate the modes of transportation that will be used by obstetrical patients for emergency transfer. The applicant must have written protocols, procedures, and transfer agreements for the appropriate transfer of patients to a nearby acute care facility offering obstetrical services for emergency care.
8. The charges for obstetrical services for the proposed facility should be indicated and compared to those of existing obstetrical service providers in the proposed service area.
9. The applicant must document the availability of adequate professional staff to provide services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, as per licensing requirements; to deliver all designated obstetrical services in the proposal. The governing body of the birthing center must appoint a medical director who is board certified in obstetrics/gynecology or family practice. Each physician practicing or consulting in the birthing center shall have admitting privileges at a designated back-up hospital.
10. The applicant must demonstrate that the proposed obstetrical services will be offered in a physical environment that conforms to applicable federal standards, manufacturer's specifications, and licensing agencies' requirements.