

NOMINATION FOR  
CDR Rosemary Bolza RN, CNM, MPH  
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Nominated for the Lucille Woodville Award

Nominated by

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**ACCOMPLISHMENT:**

CDR Rosemary Bolza's extraordinary commitment to the midwifery profession in the Navajo Nation (Fort Defiance Indian Health Service - FDIH); and on deployments to the Rabia-e-Balkhi Women's Hospital in Afghanistan deserve recognition. I am honored to nominate CDR Bolza for her work as the Nurse Manager of the FDIH OB/GYN Inpatient unit from 2007 to the present, and her work with the DHHS Afghan Health Initiative in 2004 and 2009.

**BACKGROUND:**

CDR Bolza, a pillar of the Fort Defiance Hospital Midwifery Community, has demonstrated her strong commitment to the health of Native American women and children as the Nurse Manager of the OB/GYN Inpatient Unit and the Supervisory Midwife of the Hospital. FDIH is one of nine IHS and tribal facilities providing health care to the Native American population. CDR Bolza, a Certified Nurse Midwife, earned a Master in Public Health from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. CDR Bolza provides midwifery services in FDIH under the challenging circumstances demonstrated in the Census statistics below.

	Navajo Area rate	U.S. rate
Diabetes deaths	35.9%	13.5%
Births	21.7%	14.5%
Teen Births (13-19 yrs)	16.9%	12.7%
Prenatal care first trimester	56.4%	82.5%
Infant deaths (<1 yr of age)	8.2	7.2
Post natal deaths (28-360 days)	4.4	2.5

The US Department of Health and Human Services 2007 Program Assessment of the Afghan Health Initiative stated that because of the security situation in Afghanistan and budget restrictions, it is difficult to recruit and retain qualified staff trainers. Additionally, U.S. government personnel are required to stay at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul which has severe housing limitations. To help recruit trainers, HHS is reaching out to the Indian Health Service, to provide additional personnel. CDR Bolza volunteered in 2004 to deploy to the Rabia-e-Balkhi Women's Hospital in Afghanistan. CDR Bolza's work was so outstanding that not only was she invited back in 2009, she has been formally invited to join the leadership as a midwife on the Afghan Health Initiative Team.

## INTERVENTIONS:

CDR Bolza's interventions at FDIH included:

- Training staff nurses and midwives on following best practices in the OB/GYN Inpatient Unit.
- Increasing the efficiency of labor and delivery practices (i.e. use of an exercise ball for labor pain relief, use of a birthing stool so that the rate for epidural and intrathecal anesthesia is a low 3%)
- Initiated an OB/GYN training program for FDIH Registered Nurses without previous OB/GYN experience in 2007. Four RN's have graduated from the program within the past three years.
- Successfully mentoring over 25 Nurse Midwives during her tenure at FDIH
- Establishing the Navajo Nation Breast Feeding Coalition in 2008 and nurturing it to function and thrive independently.
- Co-founding the Navajo/Zuni/Hopi Community Alliance against sexual assault in 2007. This task force has connected with Local Police Departments, Medical Facilities, Tribal Social Service Agencies, the Prosecutors Office, the Office of the First Lady of the Navajo Tribe, as well as other community organizations.

CDR Bolza's interventions for the Afghan Health Initiative over a 12 week period included:

- Training for supervisory midwives in problem solving, shock & dehydration, postpartum hemorrhage, newborn care, use of the partograph, and sexually transmitted infections.
- Unit and Operating Room assessments with a focus on patient safety.

## OUTCOMES:

CDR Bolza's work resulted in the FDIH caesarian rate consistently being maintained at a low of 15%, which is half the National average. Given the disadvantages of a higher teen birth rate and prenatal care lower than the national average, it is remarkable that the C-section rate is so low. The Breast Feeding Coalition CDR Bolza established contributed to the FDIH maternal breast feeding rate at discharge of 85%, which is above the National Healthy People goal of 75%.

With an average of 50 births per day at the Rabia-e-Balkhi Hospital in Kabul, Afghanistan, the training provided to the supervisory midwives by CDR Bolza was critical with far reaching consequences. CDR Bolza also submitted a summary of challenges and recommendations with regard to workload, equipment/supplies, maintenance, infection control, staffing, and patient care documentation to the hospital director and the International Medical Corps which was working to improve the administration of the hospital.

I highly recommend CDR Rosemary Bolza for the 2010 Lucille Woodville Award in appreciation for noteworthy contributions to improving the health and well-being of mothers and newborns both in the Fort Defiance Service Unit, in Arizona as well as the Rabia-e-Balkhi Hospital in Kabul, Afghanistan