

Call for Papers: *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth* Special Issue on Women's Health and Empowerment

BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth is accepting submissions for a special journal supplement that will feature **papers from multiple disciplines on women's health and empowerment related to pregnancy and childbirth.**

This special issue is sponsored by the University of California Global Health Institute's Centre of Expertise on Women's Health and Empowerment (COEWHE). The COEWHE is comprised of academics from across the campuses of the University of California, as well as practitioners and international partners. Collectively, we represent a wide variety of disciplines and approaches to improving women's health and empowerment. By prioritizing women's health concerns, rights, and empowerment, we aim to catalyze societal-level changes that will yield sustainable improvements in health and well-being for women on a global scale.

The issue will focus on the role of empowerment in pregnancy and childbirth. Submissions can include perspectives from a single discipline or multiple disciplines (e.g. law, public health, economics, medicine, history, sociology, anthropology, etc.); can include empirical research; can put forward innovative conceptual or theoretical frameworks; or can be literature reviews, with an emphasis on implications for creating and sustaining meaningful change. Pregnancy and childbirth topics include, but are not limited to: antenatal care, abortion, labor, delivery, obstetric care, newborn care, unintended pregnancy, family planning, fertility, infant mortality, maternal morbidity and mortality, STIs/HIV, Mother-to Child transmission of HIV and sexuality. Articles must include a construct that is conceptualized as women's empowerment (defined broadly)¹.

The COEWHE will cover all open access publication fees on behalf of researchers whose papers are selected for inclusion in this issue, unless a researcher has funding to pay for this service.

Guest editors of this special issue will be: Ndola Prata, MD, MSc; Paula Tavrow, PhD; and Ushma Upadhyay, PhD, MPH. All are affiliated with the COEWHE. Each manuscript will go through a peer-review process managed by the COEWHE, following BMC procedures and requirements. Submission to this supplement does not guarantee acceptance.

The following questions are aligned with the focus of this special issue and may aid in the development of manuscripts:

- How is empowerment associated with pregnancy and childbirth outcomes?
- What is the historical trend in development agencies with respect to women's empowerment and health?
- Are empowered youth more likely to avoid unintended pregnancy and abortion?

¹ Women's empowerment: "The expansion of people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them." From Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, agency, achievements: Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. *Development and change* 30(3), 435-464.

- What are the mechanisms through which empowerment can affect better women’s health outcomes?
- How have laws and policies affected women’s empowerment and pregnancy or childbirth?
- What are the socio-cultural factors associated with empowerment and women’s pregnancy or childbirth?
- What programs and/or policies relative to women’s empowerment have had a demonstrable effect on maternal health or women’s ability to achieve their fertility intentions?
- How have programs to influence gender norms and encourage male engagement affected women’s pregnancy and childbirth?

Submission Instructions:

For your article to be considered, please complete an “Intent to Submit form” (see below) which includes a 500-750 word abstract of your article concept. Please note that all submissions must meet *BMC*’s formatting guidelines. For the journal’s manuscript guidelines, please refer to the Instructions for Authors:

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/bmcpregnancychildbirth/authors/instructions/researcharticle>

If you have additional questions, please contact Chiao-Wen Lan (chiaowen@g.ucla.edu), who is the COEWHE coordinator.

Important Dates:

- December 15, 2015: Deadline for submitting the “Intent to Submit Form” to Chiao-Wen Lan
- February 15, 2016: Announcement of abstracts of manuscripts selected for possible inclusion in the supplement
- June 1, 2016: Deadline to send manuscripts to Chiao-Wen Lan
- June 7, 2016: Manuscripts will be sent for peer review
- July 7-14, 2016: Authors will receive feedback from peer reviewers
- September 1, 2016: Deadline to re-submit revised manuscripts to Chiao-Wen Lan

Once all revised manuscripts are received, we will submit them as a set to BMC, who will proceed with copy-editing. Publication timeline is expected to be January, 2017.

BMC Supplement Intention to Submit Form: (put this into the subject line of e-mail)

- **Name and e-mail of primary contact**
- **Tentative title of manuscript:** (no more than fifteen words)
- **Authors:** (full names and affiliations)
- **Brief description of how manuscript will address focus of this collection:** (2–3 sentences)
- **Abstract:** (500-750 words) - put into body of e-mail. No attachments, please.

Please e-mail this form to Chiao-Wen Lan (chiaowen@g.ucla.edu) by December 15, 2015.