



UWMC DOULA CARE

*THE VOLUNTEER DOULA PROGRAM
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
MEDICAL CENTER*

Scholarship Information

The Simkin School, a program of the Seattle Midwifery School and UWMC Doula Care offer a scholarship for the Labor Support Course for doulas planning to volunteer with UWMC Doula Care. These scholarships are reserved for women interested in pursuing careers in the health sciences (other than being a doula). Scholarship recipients agree to volunteer a minimum of 96 hours in exchange for the scholarship – 16 hours per month for 6 months. All scholarship applicants must first interview with the Program Coordinator.

Program Overview

Founded in 2005, UWMC Doula Care seeks to increase the availability of free labor support for women, as well as to create partnerships between doulas, doctors, nurses and hospital staff. In May 2006, UWMC Doula Care partnered with PALS Doulas, and it is now required that all volunteers be PALS Doulas members. This is a \$40 membership fee. Information can be found at www.pals-doulas.org

Volunteer doulas work a minimum of 16 hours per month and choose the hours that they volunteer. By eliminating on-call time, we hope to increase the number of women who can incorporate doula work into their lives. Our volunteers stay, on average, about 9 hours with women during labor, birth and the immediate postpartum. But of course, this can range. We have had volunteers stay as little as 1 or 2 hours or as long 2 days. We encourage our volunteers to choose time slots that are moderately flexible, so that if the baby looks like s/he will be born a little bit after that time, the doula does not have to rush off immediately. Some doula care is better than nothing, so we do understand when our volunteers have to leave before the baby is born, but we encourage people to stay as long as possible. Volunteers are encouraged to set aside between 12-24 hours for each volunteer shift. Please plan accordingly.

Due to various reasons, there are times when a volunteer doula is not needed during her "shift." In these cases, we recommend that doulas volunteer their time with antepartum patients (women in the hospital for complications during their pregnancy) or reschedule their volunteer hours. It can be frustrating to make yourself available, plan for a birth, and then not be needed. Please consider if this model will work for you.

Volunteer Requirements

In order to become a UWMC Doula Care volunteer, you must have completed the Labor Support Course at Seattle Midwifery School or any other DONA approved course.

For new doulas, there may be an opportunity to attend births with experienced doulas through this volunteer program.

In addition to the labor support course, doulas are also expected to have read the following two texts before volunteering with this program:

- *Pregnancy, Childbirth, and the Newborn* (4th edition, 2001) by Penny Simkin, Janet Whalley, and Ann Keppler
- *The Birth Partner: Everything You Need to Know to Help a Woman Through Childbirth* (3rd edition, 2008) by Penny Simkin

If you are interested in receiving this scholarship and becoming a volunteer with our program, please email uwdoulas@gmail.com to schedule an initial phone interview with the program coordinator of UWMC Doula Care.