

Midwife consultations outside of pregnancy: what happened in France after the 2009 reform ?

Carine FRANC, Quitterie ROQUEBERT, Henri PANJO

Abstract

In 2009, a healthcare reform in France expanded midwives' scope of practice to include gynecological care of non-pregnant women, alongside their traditional roles in pregnancy and childbirth. This paper explores the effect of this reform on the probability of women consulting a midwife outside of pregnancy and how this effect varies according to women's characteristics. Using administrative data on healthcare utilization in French women, we investigate the change in the probability of consulting a midwife between 2007 and 2017 among non-pregnant women aged 15 to 55. We find that this probability indeed increased after the reform, particularly among recently pregnant women and for those living in areas with poor access to healthcare services. These results suggests that women become informed of midwives' broader scope of practice during pregnancy and that these new competences are more widely used in areas where access to gynecologists and is particularly poor.