
STANDARD ON INFORMED CHOICE

Basic principles:

- ◆ Informed choice is a fundamental standard of practice for midwives in Manitoba;
- ◆ Women have the right to receive information, including the midwife's professional judgment, and be involved in the decision-making process throughout their midwifery care;
- ◆ The childbearing woman is recognized as the primary decision-maker;
- ◆ The interactive process of informed choice involves the promotion of shared responsibility between the midwife and the woman and her family;
- ◆ Midwives encourage and give guidance to women wishing to seek out resources to assist them in the decision-making process;
- ◆ The midwife is responsible for facilitating the ongoing exchange of current knowledge in a non-urgent, non-authoritarian and co-operative manner, including sharing what is known and unknown about procedures, tests, and medications.

At the outset of care, the College of Midwives of Manitoba requires that registered midwives provide each woman with the following information, ideally given in writing and followed up in discussion:

- ◆ education and experience in midwifery care of the midwives in the practice;
- ◆ services provided, including but not limited to:
 - scope of practice
 - philosophy of care
 - choice of birth setting
- ◆ contact information, including how the woman can reach a midwife known to her 24 hours a day, change of appointment procedure, off-call coverage arrangements, back-up arrangements;
- ◆ second attendant arrangements, if applicable;
- ◆ standards of practice and protocols, including:
 - continuity of care
 - discussion, consultation and transfer of care
 - supportive care
- ◆ role and responsibilities of the woman;
- ◆ confidentiality and access to records;
- ◆ any student and/or supervised practice arrangements;
- ◆ right to obtain a second opinion or transfer care to another provider.

Throughout the course of care the College of Midwives of Manitoba requires registered midwives to provide each woman with the following:

- ◆ potential benefits and risks of, and alternatives to, procedures, tests and medications;
- ◆ relevant research evidence;
- ◆ community standards and practices;
- ◆ opportunities to discuss information;
- ◆ care that is individualized and sensitive to changes in the woman's circumstances throughout pregnancy.