

College of Midwives of Manitoba

STANDARD FOR USE OF A SECOND ATTENDANT

PREAMBLE

The College of Midwives of Manitoba regulates midwives as per *The Midwifery Act and Regulations*. This legislative authority does not extend to second attendants who are not registered midwives. The purpose of this standard is to provide direction to midwives who use second attendants who are not midwives.

DEFINITION OF A SECOND ATTENDANT

A second attendant is a skilled person whose role is to work with the midwife during labour, birth and the immediate postpartum. The second attendant is trained to deal with obstetrical and neonatal emergencies.

STANDARD

Midwives must be confident that second birth attendants they are working with have the knowledge, skill and judgment to provide competent, respectful and ethical care.

When a second attendant is a member of a regulated health profession¹ they remain responsible to their regulating body during their work as a second attendant.

Midwives are accountable for the care provided by second birth attendants who are not members of a regulated profession (i.e. unregulated) and are responsible for ensuring that they provide care in accordance with relevant practice standards, community standards and clinical practice guidelines. Midwives working with unregulated second attendants must:

- Be in attendance during the provision of care by the second birth attendant
- Ensure second birth attendants document in client records in accordance with the College's standards of practice
- Obtain informed consent from clients to the participation of a second birth attendant
- Ensure clients understand the role the second birth attendant will play during the client's care
- Ensure that adequate liability coverage is in place for any second attendant who is assisting the midwife

¹ In most circumstances a second attendant will be a regulated health professional such as another midwife, a nurse, a physician etc.

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- Ensure the second birth attendants have successfully completed:
 - a CMM approved course or program in neonatal resuscitation within the last 12 months
 - A CMM approved course or program in obstetrical emergency skills and cardiopulmonary resuscitation in the last 24 months.
- Ensure the second attendant is knowledgeable and competent in the following:
 - Assessment of vital signs (blood pressure, pulse, temperature, respirations, fetal heart tones)
 - Postpartum assessment of uterine tone and position, blood loss and bladder
 - Infection control and prevention procedures
 - Knowledge of labour and birth
 - Knowledge of equipment and medication used by midwives
 - Appropriate record keeping
 - Knowledge and understanding of midwifery in Manitoba and the midwife's practice protocols
 - Skilled in observation and assessment of the newborn

A midwife who is a clinical preceptor for a CMM approved midwifery education or bridging program is permitted to have a senior midwifery student (clerkship or equivalent) from that program act in the role of second attendant.

ROLES AND DUTIES OF A SECOND ATTENDANT

The second attendant is to be present for the second stage of labour, the birth, and the immediate postpartum period as required. Midwives should ensure that the second birth attendant is orientated to their role. The second attendant's role in emergencies such as precipitate delivery, haemorrhage, newborn resuscitation, meconium-stained amniotic fluid and shoulder dystocia is to be clearly agreed upon ahead of time.

The duties of the second attendant may include the following:

First stage of labour

- Is present at the discretion of the primary midwife
- Documents as appropriate in the health record

Second stage of labour

- Provides assistance to the midwife
- Provides support to the client
- Checks layout of supplies to ensure accessibility of drugs, instruments and functioning of equipment
- Auscultates and interprets fetal heart rate
- Documents as appropriate in the health care record

Birth

- Provides assistance to the midwife
- Ensures warmth and safety of the newborn
- Assesses, reports and records the condition of the newborn
- Collaboratively determines and assesses Apgar scores

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- Administers medications as directed by the midwife
- Documents as appropriate in healthcare records

Postpartum

- Provides assistance to the midwife
- Assists the midwife during suturing, if required
- Provides support and assistance to the client
- Checks blood pressure, pulse, fundus, lochia and bladder
- Documents as appropriate in the health care record

Emergencies

- Phones Emergency Medical Services
- Phones the receiving hospital
- Assists midwife in setting up or establishes intravenous/drug therapy
- Checks blood pressure and pulse
- Assists with CPR and neonatal resuscitation
- Assists in preparation for transport
- Administers medications as directed by the midwife