

College of Midwives of Manitoba

CODE OF ETHICS FOR MIDWIVES IN MANITOBA

CODE OF ETHICS FOR MIDWIVES

- Each midwife shall act, at all times, in such a manner as to justify public trust and confidence, to uphold and enhance the good standing and reputation of the profession and, above all, to safeguard the interests of individual clients.
- Each midwife is accountable for their practice and, in the exercise of professional accountability, shall uphold the principles below.

General Responsibilities

- Respect and support birth as a natural life process.
- Clearly inform and educate clients and the public as to the philosophy, role, function and standards of midwifery practice.
- Clearly inform clients and other health care practitioners of the scope and limitations of midwifery practice.
- Acknowledge individual susceptibility to implicit bias¹ throughout the care relationship.

Responsibilities to the Client

- Promote and safeguard the well-being of clients, advocating for clients' interests to be heard.
- Provide care which respects individuals' needs, values and dignity and in particular without prejudice on the basis of age, race, religion, culture, language, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, mental or physical abilities, socio-economic status, source of income, political belief, or institutionalization.
- Avoid any abuse of the information gained due to the privileged relationship which exists with clients.
- Recognize their individual responsibility as a health care provider to examine and address the power gradient inherent in their professional role and institutional position in enhancing culturally safe care.
- Within the midwife's sphere of influence, ensure that no action or omission on their part is detrimental to the interests, or safety of clients.
- When aware that a deficiency of care has occurred, ensure the client is informed and that all responsible midwives are aware.
- Refrain from the practice of midwifery while their ability to perform any professional service is impaired.
- Refer to others when they have reached the limit of their expertise.
- Recognize and accept that loss may be a part of pregnancy and birth and, in doing so, support the client and their family in dealing with this loss according to their individual needs.
- Not abandon or refuse to attend a client in active labour.

¹ "Implicit bias refers to attitudes and stereotypes that occur unconsciously and inform our thinking, beliefs and behaviors." (Stats, 2014).

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Informed Decision Making

- Support the right of clients/families to participate actively in decisions about their care.
- Respect clients' right to informed choice, acknowledging their individual needs, values and dignity.
- Openly acknowledge to clients and other health care practitioners any contentious objection or conflict of interest, which may affect the clients' right to informed choice or access to care.
- Recognize themselves as persons of moral worth, including duties of moral self-respect and the preservation of integrity.

Confidentiality

- Refrain from disclosing confidential information obtained in the course of professional practice without the consent of clients or persons entitled to act on their behalf, except where disclosure is required or authorized by law.

Duty to Warn

- Make known to an appropriate person or authority where it appears that the ability of a colleague to maintain standards of practice appears to be in jeopardy.²

Responsibilities to the College, the Profession, and to Oneself

- Work respectfully with other health professionals, consulting and referring as necessary as per Standards or when the client's need for care exceeds the competencies of the midwife.
- Strive to maintain and improve professional knowledge and competence.
- Facilitate ethical research in midwifery practice.

Financial and Personal Gain

- Refuse to accept any gift, favour or hospitality which might be interpreted as either professional endorsement of a commercial product or which might be interpreted as providing preferential treatment or consideration to the client.
- Ensure that their professional status is not used in the promotion of commercial products or services; declare any financial or other interests in relevant organizations providing such goods or services; and ensure that their professional judgment is not influenced by commercial considerations.

² Consult the Registrar for assistance if required.