

## 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.