

GENERAL COMPETENCIES**A. The entry level midwife should have the knowledge and skills to:**

1. provide holistic care and advice to the woman and her family during pregnancy, labour, birth and the postpartum period;
2. provide care consistent with the Midwifery Act and Regulation, College of Midwives' Philosophy, Code of Ethics and Standards;
3. provide continuity of care throughout the childbearing cycle including establishing and maintaining a relationship with the woman;
4. communicate effectively using format and language appropriate to the intended audience;
5. provide culturally appropriate and sensitive care;
6. validate the woman's experience¹
7. use critical thinking to make appropriate clinical judgments as an autonomous primary care provider;
8. promote normal birth;
9. facilitate informed choice;
10. develop, implement and evaluate, with the woman, an individualized plan for midwifery care;
11. provide care in a variety of out-of-hospital and in-hospital settings;
12. conduct births and care for the woman and the newborn on her own responsibility;
13. order, perform and interpret results of screening and diagnostic tests for the prenatal, intrapartum, postpartum and newborn periods as well as in well woman care in accordance with the Midwifery Regulation and established standards;
14. prescribe, order and administer pharmacologic and non pharmacologic agents in accordance with the Midwifery Regulation and established standards;
15. recognize risk factors and abnormal conditions, recommend and initiate treatment and/or consult or refer as appropriate;
16. provide information about care alternatives including options, risks and benefits;
17. limit the spread of disease by using appropriate infection control measures;
18. establish and maintain comprehensive, relevant and confidential records;

¹ Validate refers to understanding and acknowledging that the past and present context & circumstances of a woman's life shape and affect her experience, as she defines it.

19. assist the woman and her family to access appropriate community resources;
20. utilize preventative measures, health education and promotion.

SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES

I. EDUCATION AND COUNSELING

A. The entry level midwife should have the knowledge of:

1. the principles and processes of informed choice;
2. the principles of adult education;
3. strategies for interpersonal communication and counseling;
4. theoretical approaches to prenatal and early parenting education;
5. historical, social and cultural influences on childbearing and early parenting;
6. issues related to grief and loss.

B. The entry level midwife should have the skills to:

1. be present with and attentive to the woman throughout her childbearing experience;
2. assess the well being of the woman in the context of her family and community and provide her with information, education and support according to her needs;
3. facilitate the process of informed choice;
4. utilize a broad range of communication skills including active listening, effective questioning and facilitating open discussion;
5. provide prenatal and early parenting education to enhance the woman's confidence and competence in childbearing and parenting;
6. assist the woman and her family in planning and preparing for the birth experience and early parenting;
7. facilitate integration of the birth experience for the woman and her family;
8. provide information and resources to the woman and her family regarding self-care, normal postpartum progress, including its emotional and psychological aspects, and signs and symptoms of common postpartum complications;
9. provide information and resources to the woman and her family regarding infant growth, development, behavior, nutrition, feeding and care, including the benefits and practice of breastfeeding;

10. counsel and support the woman and her family in responding to grief and loss during childbearing.

II. CARE DURING PREGNANCY

A. The entry level midwife should have the knowledge of:

1. general female anatomy and physiology including detailed knowledge of the reproductive system;
2. physical, emotional, sexual and social factors and changes associated with pregnancy, including those likely to influence its outcome;
3. genetics, embryology and fetal development and their implications;
4. nutritional requirements during pre-conception and pregnancy;
5. the physiology and treatment of common discomforts of pregnancy;
6. methods for diagnosing pregnancy, establishing due date and assessing gestational age and the progress of pregnancy;
7. screening and diagnostic tests available during pregnancy;
8. common therapies used during pregnancy and their effects, risks and benefits;
9. environmental, occupational, biologic and pharmacologic hazards to the woman and the fetus;
10. variations of normal and abnormalities which may occur during pregnancy;
11. infections prior to and during pregnancy and their implications;
12. principles and procedures for responding to fetal malpresentation.

B. The entry level midwife should have the skills to:

1. obtain a comprehensive health history including medical, psychosocial and cultural information;
2. confirm pregnancy and establish estimated due date;
3. assess nutritional intake and status and provide or recommend counseling as appropriate;
4. address common discomforts associated with pregnancy;
5. recommend appropriate therapies which may be used during pregnancy;

6. perform a complete basic physical examination of the woman;
7. perform ongoing assessments of the woman during pregnancy and identify abnormalities and initiate treatment and/or consult or refer as appropriate;
8. perform a vaginal exam and assess the soft and bony structures of the pelvis, uterine size, shape, consistency and mobility, and cervical and vaginal health;
9. perform a speculum exam to assess cervical and vaginal health and obtain the necessary specimens to determine the presence of sexually transmitted infections, vaginal infections and cytological changes;
10. perform venipuncture and capillary puncture;
11. perform abdominal palpation and fundal height measurement to assess uterine size, fetal position and presentation, and to estimate fetal size, number and gestational age;
12. assess fetal well being through such methods as fetal heart auscultation and evaluation of fetal movement.

III. CARE DURING LABOUR, BIRTH & THE IMMEDIATE POSTPARTUM PERIOD²

A. The entry level midwife should have the knowledge of:

1. the normal process of labour including the mechanisms of labour and birth;
2. maternal pelvic anatomy and anatomy of the fetus and its landmarks as relevant to assessing fetal position and the progress of labour;
3. indicators of maternal and fetal well being;
4. requirements for a safe birthing environment;
5. physiologic methods to facilitate labour;
6. pain assessment;
7. emotional and physical support measures for labour and birth;
8. normal variations and abnormalities of the fetal heart rate and methods of assessing the fetal heart in labour;
9. the significance of ruptured membranes and methods for reducing risks of infection;
10. abnormalities of labour, birth and the immediate postpartum period;
11. prevention, assessment and management of exhaustion, dehydration and ketonuria during labour;

²For the purposes of this document the immediate postpartum period refers to the immediate hours following birth when the midwife is providing care until mother and newborn are stable.

12. techniques to prevent and reduce perineal trauma;
13. indications and procedure for episiotomy;
14. indications and procedure for repair of lacerations and episiotomy;
15. pharmacological & non pharmacological agents and therapies used during the intrapartum period;
16. emergency measures, obstetrical procedures and interventions;
17. neonatal resuscitation and stabilization;
18. physiologic changes associated with the transition from fetus to newborn;
19. benefits of uninterrupted mother/baby interaction.

B. The entry level midwife should have the skills to:

1. provide emotional and physical support to the labouring woman and her support people;
2. assess the onset and progress of labour and take appropriate actions;
3. recognize variations of normal and abnormal labour patterns and identify probable causes and potential interventions when indicated;
4. assess the fetal heart using a variety of methods such as a fetoscope, doppler and electronic fetal monitor, interpret findings and take action when appropriate;
5. determine status of the membranes and perform amniotomy when indicated;
6. assess amniotic fluid;
7. assess the bladder and perform urinary catheterization as necessary;
8. assess the need for pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic measures during labour, birth and the immediate postpartum period;
9. prescribe, order and administer pharmacologic and non pharmacologic agents as necessary in the intrapartum in accordance with the Midwifery Regulation and established standards;
10. administer injections and inhalants, insert intravenous catheters and administer intravenous fluids and medications in accordance with the Midwifery Regulation and established standards;
11. protect the perineum, avoid unnecessary episiotomy and minimize lacerations;
12. perform an episiotomy when indicated;

13. assist and support the spontaneous vaginal birth of the baby;
14. recognize signs of separation of the placenta, assist in the delivery of, and inspect the placenta;
15. collect cord blood samples;
16. examine the perineal and vulval areas for lacerations, hematomas and abrasions and repair lacerations and episiotomies in accordance with the Midwifery Regulation and established standards;
17. recognize maternal and newborn complications, initiate emergency measures as required and consult and/or transfer care for critical problems arising during labour, birth and the immediate postpartum;
18. provide immediate assessment and care of the newborn, including assessment of respiratory and cardiac status and temperature maintenance;
19. support the newborn's transition immediately following the birth;
20. perform neonatal resuscitation according to the Midwifery Regulation and established standards;
21. assist and support the early initiation of breastfeeding
22. assess and facilitate uninterrupted mother/baby interaction.

IV. CARE OF THE WOMAN DURING THE POSTPARTUM PERIOD, INCLUDING BREASTFEEDING

A. The entry level midwife should have the knowledge of:

1. maternal anatomy and physiology in the postpartum period, and the normal progress of the postpartum period;
2. anatomy of the breast, physiology of lactation and principles of effective breastfeeding, including the normal process and necessary conditions and factors for its success;
3. management of common discomforts of the postpartum period;
4. postpartum complications, including complications of breastfeeding, and their management;
5. emotional, psychological, social, cultural and sexual aspects of the postpartum period, breastfeeding and early parenting;
6. nutritional requirements of women during the postpartum period, including for lactation;

7. the benefits of breastfeeding for mother and infant;
8. pharmacological agents and other substances and therapies used during the postpartum period and their effect on breastfeeding;
9. stimulation and suppression of lactation;
10. family planning, methods of contraception and their risks and benefits;
11. screening and diagnostic tests available during the postpartum period.

B. The entry level midwife should have the skills to:

1. assess the health and monitor the progress of the woman in the postpartum period;
2. assist the mother to establish and maintain breastfeeding, or her alternate chosen method of infant feeding;
3. identify special or abnormal maternal or infant situations that may influence breastfeeding, and develop an appropriate plan;
4. use appropriate therapies to support effective breastfeeding;
5. recognize postpartum complications, including postpartum depression, and take appropriate action, including consulting or referring when indicated;
6. prescribe, order and administer appropriate pharmacologic and non pharmacologic agents as necessary in the postpartum period in accordance with the Midwifery Regulation and established standards;
7. conduct a six week postpartum assessment of the woman, including vaginal and speculum examination where appropriate;
8. counsel clients in decision-making about and use of contraceptive methods;
9. fit barrier methods and prescribe contraceptives according to the Midwifery Regulation;
10. provide appropriate referrals for ongoing care;
11. facilitate the closure of the midwife-woman relationship.

V. CARE OF THE NEWBORN IN THE POSTPARTUM PERIOD**A. The entry level midwife should have the knowledge of:**

1. anatomy and physiology of the newborn;
2. newborn assessment, including gestational age assessment;
3. growth and development of the healthy newborn;
4. the nutritional needs of the newborn including properties of breast milk and infant formula, and methods of infant feeding;
5. newborn screening and diagnostic testing;
6. abnormal conditions in the newborn;
7. prophylactic medications commonly administered to the newborn;
8. effects of prescriptive and non prescriptive substances on the newborn, including those excreted through breast milk;
9. the physical and emotional needs of the newborn including appropriate safety considerations;
10. issues related to circumcision.

B. The entry level midwife should have the skills to:

1. perform a complete physical examination of the newborn;
2. provide ongoing newborn care and assessment of well-being and development;
3. recognize complications in the newborn and make appropriate referrals as necessary;
4. administer medications to the newborn according to the Midwifery Regulation and established standards;
5. perform a heel puncture to obtain blood samples.

VI. WELL WOMAN CARE & FAMILY PLANNING**A. The entry level midwife should have the knowledge of:**

1. physiological and psychosocial components of human sexuality in general and during the childbearing cycle;
2. physiological and psychosocial aspects of human fertility;

3. normal reproductive health and signs and symptoms of pathology;
4. factors involved in women's responses to pregnancy, and resources for counseling and referral, including for women seeking termination.

B. The entry level midwife should have the skills to:

1. assess the woman's reproductive and sexual health;
2. identify, evaluate and provide information on treatment for problems associated with reproductive health & make referrals where appropriate;
3. inform and advise clients on issues of human sexuality, fertility and unplanned pregnancies, and make referrals where appropriate;
4. provide information on various methods of contraception.

VII. PROFESSIONAL, INTER-PROFESSIONAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE PROFESSION

A. The entry level midwife should have the knowledge of:

1. current issues in midwifery at local, provincial, national and international levels;
2. the general structures and principles of the Canadian health care system;
3. the history and philosophy of midwifery in Canada;
4. the structure and function of professional and regulatory midwifery organizations in Canada;
5. legislation and public health policies and procedures relevant to midwifery in Manitoba;
6. community standards of care and the roles and responsibilities of other health care providers and their scope of practice in Manitoba;
7. the process of teambuilding and engaging in professional and inter-professional partnerships;
8. legal requirements of midwifery practice, including those respecting privacy and freedom of information, informed consent and informed choice, recording and reporting, and provincial data collection requirements;
9. the code of ethics, Act, regulations, standards, policies and guidelines for midwifery in Manitoba;
10. the role of midwives as preceptors and mentors.

B. The entry level midwife should have the skills to:

1. work in a collegial manner with other caregivers in a variety of settings;
2. communicate and collaborate effectively and professionally with midwifery colleagues, students and other caregivers;
3. practise in accordance with provincial codes of ethics and other ethical frameworks, regulations and standards guiding midwifery practice.

VIII. PROFESSIONAL & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**A. The entry level midwife should have the knowledge of:**

1. methods for assessing statistical evidence and critically appraising the research literature;
2. continuing education and quality assurance programs and requirements for the ongoing evaluation of midwifery practice;
3. midwifery practice management;
4. strategies for reflective practice and self care.

B. The entry level midwife should have the skills to:

1. engage in reflective practice;
2. share midwifery knowledge and participate in midwifery-related research;
3. critically review, appraise and apply new information, including research findings, relevant to midwifery practice;
4. participate in the development and management of a midwifery practice;
5. recognize her personal and professional boundaries and limitations, practice appropriate self-care, and seek support when needed.

IX. ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES

There are a number of additional competencies that an entry level midwife may perform, but are not required for registration to practice. These include managing epidurals, applying scalp electrodes, induction and augmentation of labour, suturing 3rd degree lacerations and inserting intrauterine contraceptive devices. The knowledge and skills required to perform these competencies are found in individual courses and/or certification criteria and require approval by the College of Midwives of Manitoba in order to perform them.