

Midwifery Policy

The midwife works in partnership with women, on her own professional responsibility, to give women the necessary support, care and advice during pregnancy, labour and the postpartum period up to six weeks, to facilitate births and to provide care for the newborn.

The midwife understands, promotes and facilitates the physiological processes of pregnancy and childbirth, identifies complications that may arise in mother and baby, accesses appropriate medical assistance, and implements emergency measures as necessary. When women require referral midwives provide midwifery care in collaboration with other health professionals.

Midwives have an important role in health and wellness promotion and education for the women, her family and the community. Midwifery practice involves informing and preparing the woman and her family for pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding and parenthood and includes certain aspects of women's health, family planning and infant wellbeing.

The midwife may practise in any setting, including the home, the community, hospitals, or in any other maternity service. In all settings, the midwife remains responsible and accountable for the care she provides.

(New Zealand Midwifery Council, August 2004)

- > NZNO recognises midwifery as a separate profession from nursing.
- > NZNO members belonging to the NCOM are eligible for a reduced membership fee.
- > NZNO and NZCOM representatives meet regularly.
- > NZNO and NZCOM recognise that at times there may be policy differences between the two organisations and each will represent their respective members.
- > NZNO and NZCOM will work collaboratively on areas where there is agreement.

Visit the NZCOM website: <http://www.nzcom.org.nz>

NZNO supports midwifery practice and acknowledges that midwifery is a distinct profession from nursing, supported by the provisions of the Health Practitioners Competency Assurance Act (2003) and the regulatory function of the Midwifery Council of New Zealand. NZNO considers that the skills of nursing and midwifery are complementary. Collaborative working arrangements can enhance care provision in complex situations and will result in optimal outcomes for mothers and babies e.g. NNU/ICU.

NZNO support for Midwife members includes:

- Midwives network through www.nzno.org.nz web home page
- Library services
- Submissions on issues of relevance to maternity care and that have an underlying philosophy of support for midwives and the midwifery profession
- Indemnity insurance

- Industrial support
- Industrial bargaining through NZNO/DHB MECA process

Midwives seeking professional or clinical advice and support will be referred to the New Zealand College of Midwives (www.midwife.org.nz).

NZNO supports the regular process of review of undergraduate midwifery education, in order to support education programmes that meet the needs of the profession and the changing demands of maternity care provision in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Associated Policies and Documents

Registered Obstetric Nurse, August 2004

Collaborative statement on Home Birth and Primary Birth Units, 17 May 2006

NZNO Guidelines: Inpatient Safe Staffing Ratios for Maternity Services, 18 August 2004

Date adopted: September 2010

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Mission statement

NZNO is committed to the representation of members and the promotion of nursing and midwifery. NZNO embraces Te Tiriti o Waitangi and works to improve the health status of all peoples of Aotearoa/ New Zealand through participation in health and social policy development.

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