



## INTRODUCTION

The British Columbia College of Family Physicians (BCCFP) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the proposed Midwives Regulation Amendments as posted on the provincial government's *Ministry of Health Legislation and Professional Regulation* website.

The BC College of Family Physicians has been an early supporter of the recognition of Midwifery as a recognized health profession and the establishment of the appropriate Regulations and of the College of Midwifery of BC. Family physician colleagues have supported and continue to support Midwifery. For example, the Department of Family & Community Medicine at Providence Health Care supported Midwifery as a Section within the Department, prior to its attaining its own Department status. The UBC Department of Family Practice supports the Midwifery Program as a Division within the Department. Across the province, family physicians work in the community and in hospitals in partnership with Midwives.

These comments are in reference to the proposed changes to Midwives Regulations. The BCCFP believes that the proposed amendments are appropriate and will serve to reinforce the capabilities of Midwifery to respond to the need for highly trained professional support for mothers, infants and their families.

## REVIEW

In preparing this response, the BCCFP has reviewed the:

- Current proposed amendments to the Midwives Regulation within the Health Professions Act (HPA)
- Midwives Regulation with schedules (June 2007)
- Model of Midwifery (June 2007)
- Midwifery Standards of Practice Policy (April 1997) and other related documents

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

We would like to recommend that the following be deleted

- Practice of vacuum-assisted delivery – section 5 (1) (g) (IV) (D), surgical assist – section 5 (1) (g) (VI), intubation of the newborn (ii) and in schedule B, deletion of Cervical Ripening agents for the purpose of induction of Labor. If such are to be allowed for certain circumstances, such as in remote communities, specific and appropriate training with certification and periodic recertification would be an essential requirement.
- We believe that a more thorough and detailed dialogue and discussion should occur so that standards are set in terms of "credentials" required in the interest of patient safety.



We would further like to recommend:

- Restriction on the administration of antiviral to exclude for the purpose of HIV treatment (other than continuing use as previously prescribed by a physician) - section 5 (1) (j), referencing Schedule B

We would lastly like to clarify:

- Services of Midwives are to be restricted to the designated scopes of practice during normal pregnancy, labour, delivery and the postpartum period. The BCCFP subscribes to the "Joint Policy Statement on Normal Childbirth" published in Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Canada, to which the College of Family Physicians of Canada contributed. Therefore it should be emphasized that home births should continue to be low risk and should exclude breech delivery, twin pregnancy and vaginal delivery after caesarean section.
- We understand that typically postpartum should be six weeks and in this period midwives can address those health issues which directly relate to the effects of parturition and contraceptive advice, and for the infant, education and support for normal newborn care. It has been brought to our attention that care may on occasions extend beyond this time or scope. While the challenge of finding adequate a family physician may provide a rationale for this practice, we do not believe it is, nor should it be, acceptable practice. We believe the Midwives Regulation, as amended, does exclude such practice.
- We would have appreciated a longer timeline to respond to these changes. This would have given us an opportunity to be more comprehensive in our response and would have given us time to dialogue with other health organizations involved.

In conclusion, the British Columbia College of Family Physicians welcomes the opportunity to respond to these recommendations and looks forward to the response of the Health Professions' Council.

Thank you.

Dr Shamim Jetha  
President,  
BC College of Family Physicians  
On behalf of the Board

CC:

College of Physicians & Surgeons of British Columbia  
British Columbia Medical Association  
College of Midwifery of British Columbia