

PHILOSOPHY OF CARE

Midwifery care is concerned with the promotion of women's health. It is centred upon an understanding of women as healthy individuals progressing through the life cycle. It is based on a respect for pregnancy as a state of health and childbirth as a normal physiologic process, and a profound event in a woman's life.

Midwifery is dynamic in its approach, based upon an integration of knowledge that is derived from the arts and sciences and tempered by experience and research.

Midwifery is holistic by nature, combining an understanding of the social, emotional, cultural, spiritual, psychological and physical ramifications of a woman's reproductive health experience.

Midwifery promotes wellness in women, babies and families both autonomously and in collaboration with other health professions.

Midwifery care takes place in partnership with women and is provided in a manner that is flexible, creative, empowering and supportive.

Midwifery practice includes continuity of care in order to strengthen the partnership between midwives and their clients, to provide opportunities for informed choice discussions, and to enhance and protect the normal process of childbirth.

Midwifery promotes decision making as a shared responsibility between the woman, her family (as defined by the woman) and her caregivers. Midwives recognise women as primary decision makers.

Midwifery actively encourages informed choice throughout the childbearing cycle by providing complete, relevant, objective information to facilitate decision making. The practice of midwifery enables women to develop the understanding, skills and motivation necessary to take responsibility for and control of their own health.

Midwives regard the interests of the woman and the foetus as compatible. They focus their care on the mother to obtain the best outcomes for the woman and her newborn.

Midwives respect the woman's right to choose both her caregiver and place of birth in accordance with the Standards of Practice of the College of Midwives. All women, regardless of their socio-economic circumstances, have a right to accessible, comprehensive midwifery care.

Fundamental to midwifery care is the understanding that a woman's caregivers respect and support her so that she may give birth safely with power and dignity.

