

## **INFORMED CHOICE POLICY**

The *Standards of Midwifery Practice* established by the Midwifery Regulatory Council of Nova Scotia (MRCNS) include:

### **STANDARD FIVE**

**The midwife promotes informed choice throughout the childbearing experience.**

The midwife:

- 5.1 provides relevant information to the client in an unbiased manner;
- 5.2 encourages clients to actively participate in decisions about their care and the manner in which services are provided;
- 5.3 discusses with the client the scope, standards and limitations of midwifery care;
- 5.4 acts as an advocate for the client and her newborn;
- 5.5 respects the client's right to decline treatments or procedures;
- 5.6 advises the client of maternity care standards and the midwife's professional judgment with respect to safe care.

In the interactive process of informed choice, midwives provide clients with information and resources to assist them in making decisions about their own care. This process promotes shared responsibility between the midwife and client. It is the midwife's responsibility to facilitate the ongoing exchange of current knowledge and discussion of choices in a non-authoritarian, unbiased manner, including sharing what is known and unknown about procedures, tests and treatments related to maternity and newborn care.

The MRCNS requires registered midwives to provide clients with the following information throughout the course of prenatal, intrapartum, postnatal and newborn care, as needed and appropriate:

- Potential benefits and risks of procedures, tests and treatments, including available alternatives;
- Current evidence-based and community standards and practices.

The MRCNS also expects midwives to provide clients with the following information at the onset of midwifery care:

- Midwifery education and experience of the midwives in the practice team;
- Services that will be provided within the scope of midwifery practice, including choice of hospital or home birth;
- Standards and guidelines of midwifery practice, including continuity of care, consultation and transfer of care, and supportive care;
- Information about off-call and call coverage arrangements and how the client can contact a midwife in the team 24/7;
- Responsibilities of the client and family;
- Confidentiality and access to client records;
- Second birth attendant arrangements, if applicable;
- Student and/or supervised practice arrangements, if applicable.

**Adopted by the MRCNS on April 22, 2009**  
**Amended by the MRCNS on May 31, 2018**