

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Forging Ahead



College of
Midwives
of Alberta

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OUR MANDATE

The College of Midwives of Alberta (CMA) ensures public safety and enhances public trust and confidence in midwives by regulating the practice of midwifery in accordance with the *Health Professions Act*, *Midwives Profession Regulations*, the CMA's Standards of Practice and Competence, Code of Ethics and Bylaws. The CMA upholds the minimum standard of practice and competencies expected of all midwives registered to practice in Alberta.

OUR VISION

Through regulatory excellence, we will inspire trust and confidence in Midwifery Care for all childbearing families in Alberta.

OUR MISSION

As the regulatory body, the CMA supports Registered Midwives as they provide safe, competent, ethical, compassionate and evidence-informed midwifery care to diverse populations in any practice setting (community, hospital and home).

This year's Annual Report is dedicated to a midwife who has left us far too early – Nicola Strydom.

Nicola was born and raised in Africa and immigrated to Canada in 1999. Nicola completed her Midwifery Education Program in Kenmore, Washington in 2011 after working as a doula and volunteering overseas. During the same year, Nicola became a registered midwife in Alberta through the Prior Learning Experience Assessment.

From there, after becoming registered in Alberta, Nicola worked as a Registered Midwife, a student Preceptor, was part of a midwifery team, and a great friend.

CMA remembers Nicola and honors her in this edition for her dedication to the midwifery profession.



Forging Ahead

We honor those midwives who showed us the way, those who continue to provide high quality care today and those who will become the midwives of the future.

Your CMA Council & Staff

HONOURING THOSE WHO SHOWED US THE WAY

From the early days where midwifery meetings were held at a kitchen table to discuss and dream of a profession of midwifery, passionate dedicated women have pushed and forged ahead with a determination that midwives have now become famous for. Steps for becoming a profession in the province of Alberta started first with Alberta Health-managed organization to the Health Disciplines Committee and finally in 2019 with the Health Professions Act. These pioneers knew that midwifery was good for clients and their families. Recognition for the value in the profession and value for client outcomes were two of the principles asserted.

To honour these first midwives, and remember those who had passed on the midwifery torch, a Special Tea was held in their honour on May 5, 2022, International Day of the Midwife. In attendance were Past Presidents, former Council Members, a former Executive Director of the CMA, a husband of a pioneer midwife, and other movers and shakers from the early midwifery days.

This group represents the original intent of the profession of midwifery in Alberta, serving the childbearing clients and families in the very best way possible; staying home for birth if wanted and appropriate, keeping clients and babies together, preventing problems for happening, and maintaining those midwife/client relationships over generations. Client outcomes with midwifery care proved positive, and often more positive than hospital and health care system births. Cost effectiveness for midwifery care was exemplified. A solid, confident midwifery profession was initiated and built. *Thank You* to these courageous women!



International Midwives Day was celebrated May 5 across the world. Locally, several former High River Midwives along with others involved in midwifery got together to celebrate. From left to right Front row: Ron Botting, husband of founder Sandra Botting (deceased), Marie Wilkinson (former High River Midwife), Joy West Eklund (Former CMA Council Member), Cherry MacLagan (former Medicine Hat midwife and current Registration Committee member), Meryl Moulton (past CMA Council Member), and Kathleen Miller-Jobson (former High River Midwife). From left to right Back row: Sheila Harvey (former CMA Registrar), Diane Rach (past president), Marilyn Waters (former CMA Executive Director) and Sharon Prusky (Current Executive Director/Registrar).

International Midwives Day

DAN MARCINKOWSKI

International Midwives Day was celebrated May 5 across the world. Locally, several former High River Midwives along with others involved in midwifery got together to celebrate.

The day honours those midwives who are now retired.

What is midwifery exactly? Midwives operate as Primary Care Providers, for Alberta child-bearing families. So, they really specialize in Primary Care of clients in pregnancy, labor, birth, postpartum (client and newborn care) and sexual and reproductive health.

Midwives are so unique, because they actually work and assist clients for birth in both hospitals and in communities. Their office is really their vehicle, as they offer choice of birthplace for their clients.

Midwives currently work out of the High River Hospital, and in almost every area of Southern Alberta.

International Day of the Midwife was first celebrated May 7, 1991, and has since been observed in over 50 nations around the world. The idea of having a day to recognize and honor midwives came out of the 1987 International Confederation of Midwives conference in the Netherlands.

Midwives have been in Alberta ever since settlers came to the land (including Black Pioneer

Midwives). Before that time Indigenous Midwives were a vibrant presence in the sovereign nations. In fact, Indigenous midwifery is returning, just as other cultural practices are returning to indigenous societies.

"Our College of Midwives of Alberta (CMA) is a very new regulatory body, only being in existence since 2013. Since then, midwives and the CMA have grown exponentially. Today, Alberta boasts 176 Registered Midwives who practice in all areas of the province. Locally Midwives work within the High River hospital as part of the maternity team, and through community Midwifery Practices in the area (for Example Origins Midwifery Practice on Elizabeth Street in Okotoks)," said Executive Director/Registrar Sharon Prusky.

"Registered Midwives provide cost-effective, safe, competent, ethical, compassionate, evidence-informed midwifery care to diverse populations in any practice setting."

Retired midwife Sheila Harvey is happy to celebrate this day, specifically to see how far midwifery has come.

"It makes me feel very special," she said.

"It has been a lot of hard work and a lot of barriers have been overcome. For me, when I look and see what the new and younger midwives are doing and I see the graduating midwives from uni-

versities and colleges like from Mount Royal College, it is a great achievement."

"It took us a long time to make the profession what it is today in Alberta. Specifically it being taught and working alongside the province."

"The midwives in Alberta and Canada are special in that they are primary care providers. In many countries that isn't so. Clients are able to come to us and that is unique."

Diane Rach is also another local retired midwife who practiced for 12 years and celebrated International Midwives Day.

She misses most of her job. "It was a great sense of joy helping women and their families in retirement I try to stay involved with midwifery," said Rach.

"I don't miss the hours as we were on call 24, but I do miss the moms and the babies."

"Midwives are being celebrated everywhere today (May 5) and are just every pleased to be able to join and be able to celebrate the midwives that we have now. It has been a long and slow road but we have come a very long way and midwives now are regulated and they have fairly broad laboratory privileges and prescribing privileges hospital admitting privileges."

"They can work both in the hospital and the community to women and their families. I think we are all very proud of it."

ALBERTA MIDWIVES OF TODAY



Over the last three years legislative changes have happened for all health profession colleges in Alberta at an unprecedented rate. These impacts to midwives and midwifery practice is just now becoming reality. Continuing Competence legislation is now an important theme, so the Competence Committee has been planning and setting the structure and process for this change. CMA Registration Committee has become increasingly busy with legislation and midwives from other Canadian Jurisdictions and other countries wanting to come and work in Alberta. CMA activities will be highlighted “By the Numbers” below. For example, home/community birth is still a choice for midwifery clients and Alberta is proud to boast the highest rate of community birth in Canada in regulated jurisdictions.

In keeping with the proclamation of Bill 30, CMA held its last AGM, in May of 2022. Council is thinking about options for other CMA educational/information events for their registrants.

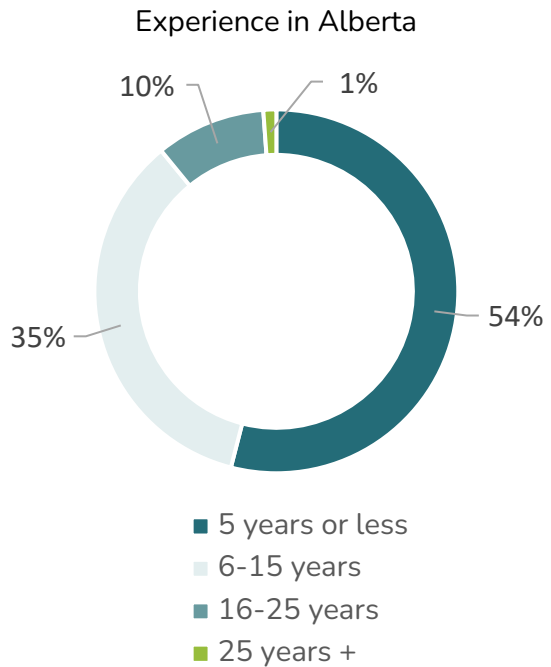
ALBERTA MIDWIVES OF TODAY

183 Total Registered Midwives

158 Practicing
Registered Midwives

~5%

Growth in Registrations
since December 2021



41 Alberta Midwife
Average Age

140
General

17
New
Registrant

1
Provisional

8 Midwives who self-identify as Indigenous

THOSE WHO WILL BECOME THE MIDWIVES OF TOMORROW

The CMA has a mandate to oversee the Mount Royal University (MRU) Midwifery Education Program. The New Registrant Program is sponsored and managed by the CMA as well.

Students undergo an intense program in their four years, with classroom and SimLab sessions, project work and then the practicum portion of their program. Around a dozen students from all backgrounds are chosen and enter the program yearly. These are truly students of the apprenticeship model, as they learn their profession from working midwives and clients in all sorts of childbearing situations. This solid practical experience contributes to the valuable unique midwifery profession.

The New Registrant/New Graduate Program further solidifies those student experiences with additional knowledge translation and skill development to allow new midwives the expertise of critical thinking and judgement so valued as a primary care provider. During this “year”, graduates consolidate their midwifery education with their mentor midwives before they become General Registrants without conditions.

Salute to the Student Preceptors and New Registrant Mentors!

The number required at any given time for student Preceptors is up to 70 practicing midwives; a sizable number indeed! CMA salutes the Alberta midwife preceptors who not only manage their client care, but shepherd students patiently and carefully through the clinical midwifery education to graduate with an astounding amount of knowledge, skill and experience.

Special thanks go out to those mentor midwives who work with the new graduates to help ensure that midwifery care in the future will be consistent, safe, and high quality.



MESSAGE FROM THE PUBLIC MEMBERS

Public members are volunteers appointed by the government of Alberta to regulatory college councils. They serve for three year terms through an Order of Council by the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta in accordance with the HPA and are funded by the government.

In 2020 the Alberta provincial government passed Bill 30: part of the Statutes Amendment Act (2020), which updated the HPA as explained on the government website:

“Changes will increase the number of public members appointed to regulatory college councils, complaint review committees and hearing tribunals to give Albertans a stronger voice and greater role in professional oversight”

“The number of public members will increase to 50% of each group’s membership”

In accordance with these requirements, the CMA Council now has five public members with the appointment of Dustin Schinbein in June. Dustin has a background in healthcare and has previous experience as a public member of council for the College of Alberta Denturists. We welcome Dustin and look forward to working with him.

Besides the work involved with council meetings, public members have participated this year in sub committees, adding resources to college strategic direction and activities.



Cathy Cornfield



Chelsey Cabaj



David Crocker



Dustin Schinbein



Melanie Bekevich

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

TIFFANY HARRISON (May 2021 to May 2022)

I served this organization as its president from January to May 2022, when I stepped down. Just reading our report from last year, I am once again reminded of the significant need to promote this unique profession as far and as wide as possible.

The wide-ranging topics that Council considered up to the end of May this year include: midwives' ability to order ultrasound for their clients within their scope of practice; the CMA Strategic Planning process; medication abortion; the AHS vaccination policy impact on midwives and the aftermath; collaborative registration and onboarding processes amongst the CMA, the midwifery association and the AHS employer; jurisprudence exam options; understanding the impact of colonization on indigenous families; discrimination against colored midwives; Public Health Inspector visits; people acting and advertising that they are midwives; and prevention and mitigation of formal complaints to the CMA.

Council welcomed Joy Maxwell to the board at the March 2022 meeting.

The Strategic Planning process began in early 2022 and at the last AGM, CMA hosted virtual focus groups with a number of registrants discussing six key questions developed by our Public Member Melanie Bekevich and the CMA registrar.

Council works hard to find the right balance between Albertan's right to competent, compassionate and ethical midwifery care and setting expectations for our registrants.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Harrison



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

MARIANNE KING (May 2021 to Present)

I started serving in the position of President for the CMA at the end of May 2022, following a Council Executive change. The CMA Council welcomed our final Public Member, Dustin Schinbein, and that brought the public member ratio to 50% on Council. Heather Martin also joined CMA Council as a Registered Midwife member at our November Council Meeting.

I inherited many of the topics and issues that Tiffany faced as the year unfolded. Some have been resolved, some are ongoing, namely the ordering ultrasound issue, next steps for the Strategic Planning process, and implementation of the IPAC Standards for the March 2023 compliance deadline.

In addition, the CMA Council addressed the first registration decision review we have had under the HPA. This process unfolded in August, and we have had subsequent activities, a new policy written, processes clarified, and a comparison survey of other midwifery college websites' registration information.

I was fortunate to attend the national meeting of the Canadian Midwifery Regulators Council (CMRC) this past October in PEI. This experience gave me a greater appreciation for the college role to meet the public mandate through midwifery education, competence and professionalism.

CMA contracted a Bylaws writer in November to develop the CMA Bylaws and the Governance Policy, including upcoming Bill 46 requirements. We look forward to discussing these as the new year arrives. The best news has to be that on December 2, 2022, the CMA Standards of Practice reached ministerial approval. We are celebrating!!

*Sincerely,
Marianne King*



MESSAGE FROM THE ED & REGISTRAR

SHARON PRUSKY

Much of my time and effort was taken up this year with Legislative changes. My big focus was on making sure the draft Standards of Practice achieved ministerial approval. This has been a long and arduous process. We can finally celebrate this achievement as of December 2, 2022. Thank you to our consultant Diane Rach, former CMA President and driver of midwifery, for hanging in there with me to see the process to the finish. I field multiple questions weekly regarding midwifery practice, scope of practice, informed decision-making, informed refusal, restricted activities, advanced authorizations, so the new Standards of Practice are now an invaluable resource for our organization and our registrants.

The Midwives Profession Regulation is also moving to a different format when Bill 46 is proclaimed, as are the restricted activities and advanced authorizations. CMA has spent multiple sessions with AB Health Professions Regulation Unit, working on the Standards and the Regulation projects.

Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) became a major focus for our organization earlier this year, and the CMA pivoted to address this area of midwifery practice. This resulted in expanding our draft IPAC standards, working with AB Health IPAC department and refining the procedures and checklists for all midwifery practices in Alberta.

Organizationally, I am very happy to have both of the other two staff members Juliana Cunha and Shireen Mathew move from part time to full time status. They are more than busy with the existing workload!

I can also speak to the Annual Report items outside of the Complaints Report. In 2022, the CMA had no inspections, and no tribunals have been held to date.

The engagement that I continue to have with both the Canadian Midwifery Regulators Council (CMRC) and the “Federation” (AFRHP) in Alberta is so informative, helpful and rewarding as the CMA “Forges Ahead”.

I continue to work hard for this organization and the intentions that those original midwives dreamed for this profession. The daily and weekly work is constantly evolving, with many projects and work that needs to be done. I now see more time where we have completed and advanced aspects of the regulatory requirements than not. This gives me motivation to press on. I also believe that the new challenges come at exactly the right time in our evolution.

The strength of the midwifery profession comes from those pioneer midwives in Alberta and is supported by the important work we do here at the CMA, that will give credence to those new midwives coming forth today and in the future. Midwifery has been, is currently, and will be a significant profession in the landscape of Alberta’s healthy future. After all, it starts with birth!

This report is exactly that – “Forging Ahead”, using the base we have created in the HPA and building critical aspects of our organization.

Sincerely,
Sharon Prusky



REGISTRATION COMMITTEE REPORT

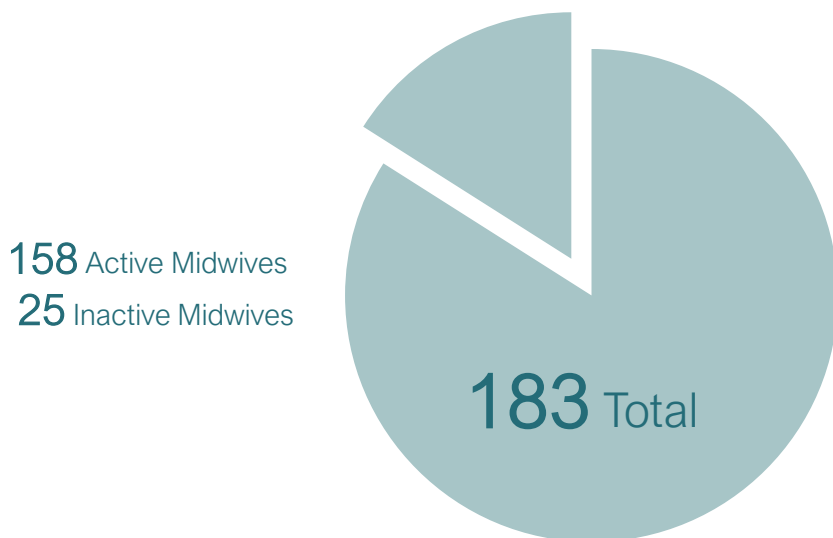
The CMA Registration Committee is mandated under the *Health Professions Act*, the *Fair Registration Practices Act* and the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA)* to determine eligibility of registration for midwives applying with the College of Midwives of Alberta.

The Registration Committee's goal is to ensure public safety through CMA's registration processes. The success of registered midwives through the registration process ensures each midwife has the required credentials and educational background to practice as a primary care provider in Alberta.

CMA has also kept a sharp eye on the evolution of the Fair Registration Practices legislation and the Fairness for Newcomers initiative. We have built this legislation into our current processes, both on the website as well as in our policies and processes, through the Registration Committee.

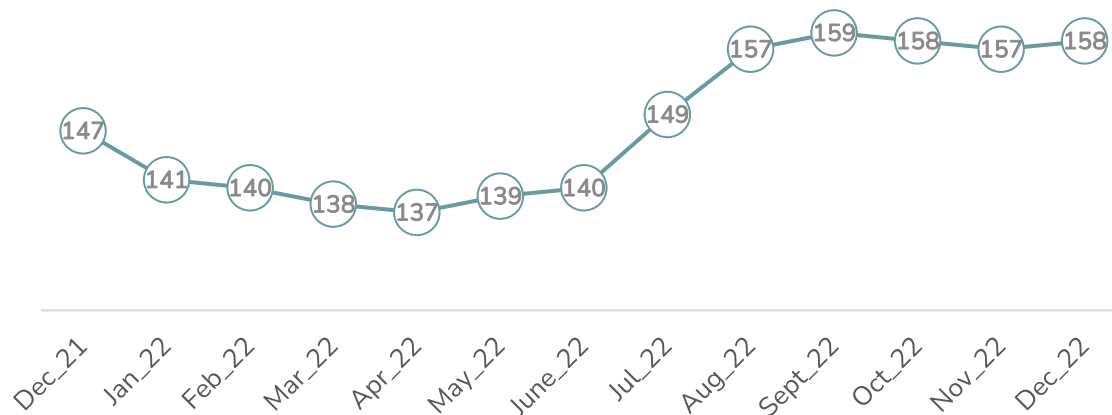
The Committee met several times in 2022 to review applications, implement changes to the registration and renewal processes, and discuss changes in legislation. Registration practices are continuously updated to ensure they accurately reflect contemporary thinking related to fairness, equivalencies and accommodation in foreign qualification recognition. *Thank You* to all the committee members: Cherry MacLagan as committee chair, Tiffany Harrison, Helen Cotter, Luisa Franco and staff lead Juliana Cunha.

NUMBER OF REGISTERED MIDWIVES



REGISTRATION COMMITTEE REPORT

CMA ACTIVE REGISTERED MIDWIVES 2021 - 2022

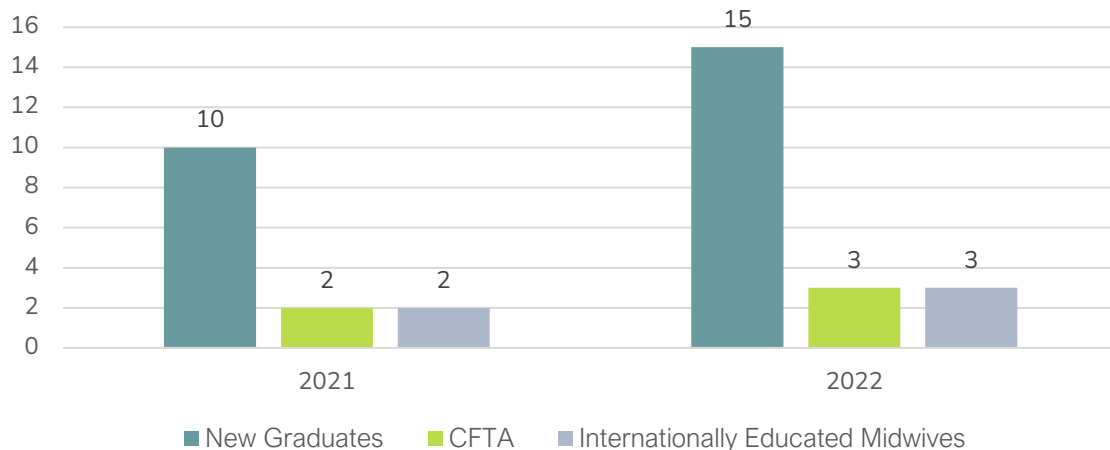


CMA REGISTRANTS 2019 - 2022

	2019	2020	2021	2022
General Registrants	122	135	136	140
General Registrants New Registrants	15	8	10	17
Provisional Registrants	2	1	1	1
Courtesy Registrants	0	0	0	0
Total Active	139	144	147	158
Inactive	30	34	28	25
Students	32	35	40	37
Total Registered	201	213	215	220

REGISTRATION COMMITTEE REPORT

APPROVED APPLICATIONS 2021-2022



APPLICATION RECEIVED FOR REGISTRATION

	2019	2020	2021	2022
New Graduates	12	7	11	15
CFTA	4	5	4	5
Internationally Educated Midwives	9	0	5	2
Total	25	12	20	22

COMPLAINTS DIRECTOR REPORT

The CMA is committed to protecting the public through managing, investigating and resolving complaints about Registered Midwife/Midwives. When a complaint is formally received, the Complaints Director is responsible for reviewing all complaints and following the discipline process outlined in the HPA.

These steps include:

- Dismissal of the complaint.
- Informal resolution.
- Conducting of an investigation.

Following an investigation, a complaint can be:

- Dismissed
- Formal resolution / agreement of the complaint or
- Referred to a Hearing Tribunal

Complaints alleging sexual abuse or sexual misconduct

As of April 1, 2019, all health profession regulators are required to report on complaints alleging sexual abuse or sexual misconduct. In 2021 we received one complaint about sexual abuse/sexual misconduct, which is currently in the investigative stage. CMA has established a patient relations program for patients who come forward with sexual abuse or sexual misconduct complaints by offering counselling support to patients.

Summary of Activities during 2022

The Complaints Director has participated in working groups and committees through virtual meetings and taking online courses focusing on all aspects of the *Health Professions Act Part 4 – Professional Conduct*.

Number of Complaints Received for 2022

Often, a member of the public may contact the Complaints Director to report a concern/inquiry or may have a question about a regulated member. Most "informal" concerns can be resolved through this method, as it seeks clarification regarding a specific standard of practice or provides an alternative way to resolve a matter without it becoming a formal complaint.

The college received eight "informal" concerns and two (2) turned into a formal complaint, totalling **SEVEN FORMAL** complaints in 2022.

The Total number of complaints since April 1, 2019, is twenty-four (24),

Since 2019:

- Nine cases completed.
- Three cases are near completion.

COMPLAINTS DIRECTOR REPORT

Complaints Investigations & Resolutions *Health Disciplines Act (HDA)*

TOTAL NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS - *HDA*

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Files open Jan 1	16	9	5	4
New Files (Jan 1-Dec 31)	0	0	0	0
Files Closed	7	4	1	3
Files still open Dec 31	9	5	4	1

STATUS OF COMPLAINTS - *HDA*

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Dismissed	3	0	0	0
Referred to Practice Review	0	3	2	2
Referred to Investigation	5	0	0	0
Proceeded to Hearing	1	3	3	3
TOTAL	9	6	5	5

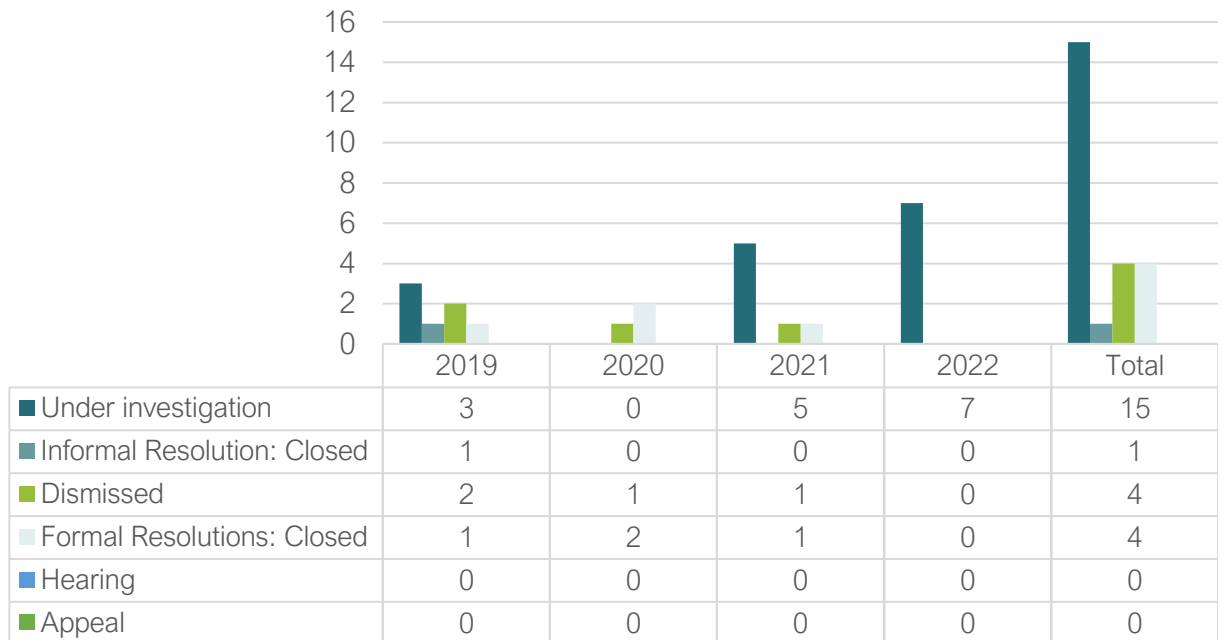
COMPLAINTS DIRECTOR REPORT

Complaints Investigations & Resolutions *Health Professions Act (HPA)*

TOTAL NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS - HPA

2019	8
2020	3
2021	7
2022	7

STATUS OF COMPLAINTS - HPA



COMPLAINTS DIRECTOR REPORT

Complaints Investigations & Resolutions *Health Professions Act (HPA)*

SOURCES OF COMPLAINTS - HPA

	Public	AHS **	Other ***	Total
2019	4	3	1*	8*
2020	3	0	0	3
2021	6	0	1	7
2022	4	2	1	7
Total	17	5	3	25*

* CD found an allegation of another midwife in a complaint filed against a midwife

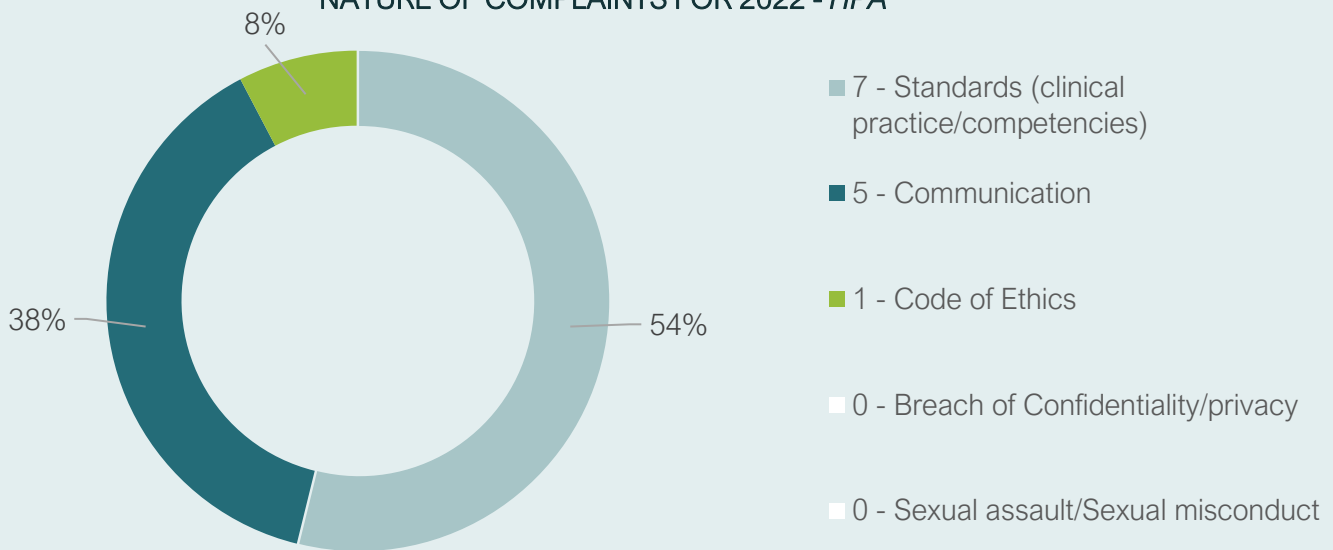
**AHS – refers to other Health care providers

*** Other – refers to Midwives, College Council or Staff

DISPOSITION OF COMPLAINTS FOR 2022 - HPA

Under investigation or almost completed	7
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NATURE OF COMPLAINTS FOR 2022 - HPA



COMPLAINTS DIRECTOR REPORT

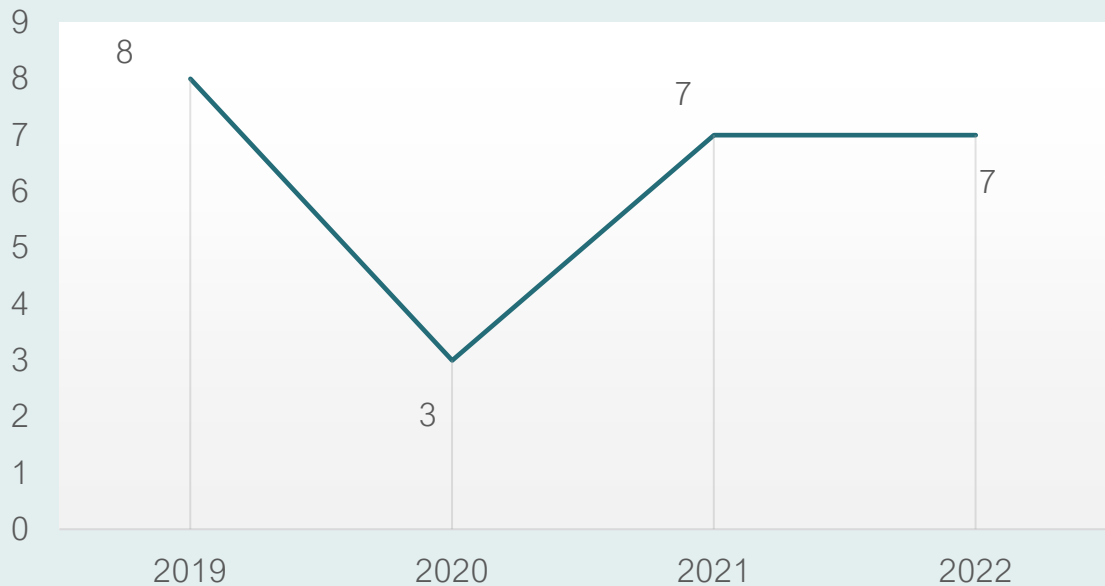
Complaints Investigations & Resolutions *Health Professions Act (HPA)*

STATUS YEARS OF PRACTICE- HPA

	0 – 5 Years	6 – 10 Years	11 – 15 Years	16+ Years	Total
2019	5	0	1	1	7
2020	0	1	1	0	2
2021	8*	0	1	0	9*
2022	3	2	1	1	7

* 2 Different complaints involved 2 regulated midwives.

NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS PER YEAR



COMPETENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Thank You to the committee members: Beth Larsson, Anna Gimpel, Lisa Cowdery, Beverly Sinnema, Marianne King and Kayla Blinkhorn as committee chair. This is one hard-working committee!

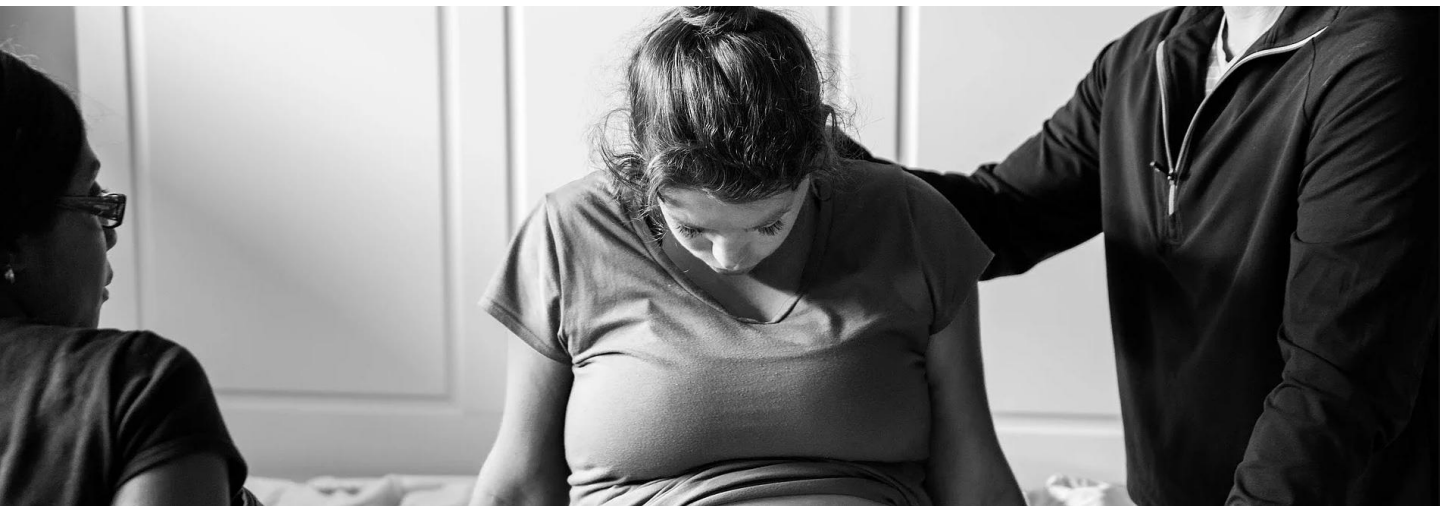
Competence document work continued: solidified the Continuing Competence Program Policy and the Continuing Professional Development Activities Policy, Peer Review, Client Evaluation of Care, drafts made of: Restricted Activities, Renewal Requirements for Continuing Competence, Practice Visits,

Even started work on the brand new set of “Guidance to the Profession” documents: Medical Consultation and Transfer of Care, Safe Midwifery Workload, and Working Alone.

Audit pilot commenced in the early part of the year to work out logistics and processes for the audit process when Bill 46 comes into effect.

Self reflection processes were also enhanced whereby registrants at renewal logged and reflected on three learning activities. Registrants also created individuals learning plan, based on the Canadian Midwifery Regulators Council (CMRC) Canadian (Role-based) competencies.

This committee also developed the draft Continuing Competence Standards as part of Bill 46 changes, with a view to send these out for consultation in 2023.



MIDWIVES' PERSPECTIVE

Through the Strategic Planning process, registrants were asked to share their perspective regarding key topics. These topics included their relationship with the CMA, future workforce planning, and reduction and mitigation of complaints. Two occasions were used to gather this information with the first being the focus groups at the May 2022 AGM.

The second opportunity came with the Renewal process. The same key question areas appeared in a segment of Renewal, where every registrant had an opportunity to give their opinion and perspective on identified issues. These data are still being collated and analyzed at year end.



FINANCE REPORT

Audited Financial Statements and Financial Information

CMA Council engaged the services of a Financial Planner after a Request for Proposals process. CMA staff met with the Vanta group in the fall of 2022 and started planning steps for finance policies for addressing investments, and for future projections for the organization. This partnership will continue into 2023.



OUR TEAM

CMA Council – Registered Midwives



Marianne King
President



Kayla Blinkhorn
Vice-President



Tiffany Harrison

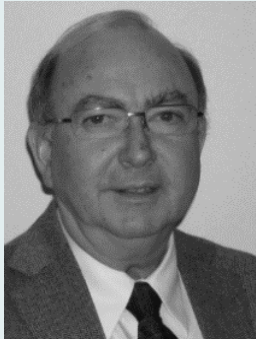


Joy Maxwell



Heather Martin

CMA Public Members



David Crocker



Chelsey Cabaj



Cathy Cornfield



Melanie Bekevich



Dustin Schinbein

CMA Staff



Sharon Prusky
Registrar/Executive Director



Juliana Cunha
Deputy Registrar/Hearing Dir.



Shireen Mathew
Finance Director/Admin Assist.



Theresa Barrett
Complaints Director



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