

Policy Name	Second Birth Attendant Policy	Number	P13
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Date Approved by Council: July 15, 2019	Effective Date: July 15, 2019	Review Date: July 2021	Revised by Council:
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A: Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to set out the College of Midwives of Alberta’s (CMA) requirements for Registered Midwives working with second birth attendants.

B: Definitions:

Primary Midwife: a Registered Midwife (RM) with a valid practice permit from the CMA, who is the most responsible provider for the client labour, birth and immediate postpartum period, and acts as the Primary Care Provider.

Most Responsible Provider: the midwife who holds overall responsibility for leading and coordinating the delivery and organization of a client’s care at a specific moment in time

Primary Care Provider: A regulated health care professional who is the initial access to the health care system. They provide first contact services and coordination to ensure continuity if specialized care is required.

Second Midwife: a Registered Midwife with a valid practice permit from the CMA, who provides collaboration and support to the Primary Midwife for the client labour, birth and immediate postpartum period.

Second Birth Attendant: an individual, other than a Registered Midwife with the CMA, who works with a Registered Midwife to provide care during labour, birth and the immediate postpartum period, but not in subsequent visits. This person is a member of a regulated professional college.

Immediate Postpartum Period: includes the time from the birth of the baby to a point of stabilization of the mother and baby when no further care and/or support from the second birth attendant is required, as determined by the Primary Midwife.

C: Policy:

Public safety is the main consideration when planning for all midwifery-managed births. CMA will accept birth arrangements where the second care provider is either a second midwife or a qualified second birth attendant, working and collaborating according to their regulatory and safety standards.

Every midwifery birth regardless of location or setting will be attended by two regulated, qualified individuals; the Primary Midwife and another regulated, qualified person as second attendant.

The second birth attendant will be either:

a.) a regulated professional staff member within an AHS facility,
or

b.) a regulated health professional in out-of-hospital situations.

Or

c.) a registered Midwifery Student in accordance with the Student Registration Policy P5

Both the Primary Midwife and the second qualified individual will be in attendance for the birth and immediate postpartum period, regardless of location or setting.

D: Roles and Responsibilities

Registered Midwives, in the Primary Midwife Role:

- Must be confident that second birth attendants they are working with have the knowledge, skill and judgement to provide safe, competent, respectful and ethical care.
- Are accountable for the care provided by second birth attendants and are responsible for ensuring that they provide care in accordance with relevant practice standards, community standards and clinical practice guidelines.

Registered Midwives working with second birth attendants must:

- Be without any restrictions
- Provide clear communication around roles and expectations of the second birth attendant during each segment of care, in accordance with the parameters of the second birth attendant's professional regulatory body
- Ensure that the actions of the second birth attendant are under the instructions, supervision and direction of the Primary Midwife (Healthcare Insurance Reciprocal of Canada, (HIROC) 2019). Note: If the second birth attendant does something contrary to the instruction of the Primary Midwife there would be no insurance coverage extended to the second birth attendant.
- Ensure that second birth attendants document in client records in accordance with CMA P# 7 Midwifery Client Records and Recordkeeping Policy, and AHS institutional policies (when in hospitals).
- Obtain informed consent from clients for the participation of the second birth attendant
- Ensure clients understand the role the second birth attendant will play during the client's care

The Second Birth Attendant will provide:

- Care as directed by the Primary Midwife
- Support in labour and immediate postpartum to the client and newborn in accordance with their scope of practice
- Necessary care in emergency situations in accordance with their scope of practice
- Support to the RM in completing required documentation
- Clear communication to all parties

Out-of-Hospital Births

When second birth attendants provide care in out-of-hospital settings, Registered Midwives must also:

- Communicate that when the second birth attendant meets the requirements of the CMA as the provincial regulator, Health Insurance Reciprocal of Canada (HIROC) will extend coverage under the Primary Midwife coverage (HIROC, 2019)
- Ensure the second birth attendant has successfully completed a CMA approved course or program in neonatal resuscitation, obstetrical emergency skills and CPR.

E: References (legislative and other):

Healthcare Insurance Reciprocal of Canada (HIROC) (2019): liability coverage for Registered Midwives and second birth attendants.

Health Professions Act (HPA), Alberta, RSA2000, updated as of April 1, 2019.

SP1: Standards of Practice and Competence (CMA), (draft), 2019.

SP3: Standard: Privacy – Health Information Management and Maintenance for Registered Midwives in Alberta (CMA) (draft)

P01: Registration Policy (CMA) (draft) (for Registered Midwives who only practice as RM second birth attendants)

P07: Midwifery Client Records and Recordkeeping Policy (CMA), 2018.

P15: Continuing Competence Policy (CMA), 2015.

Approved by Council: July 15, 2019 Revised: October 10, 2019

Cassandra Evans RM, President

College of Midwives of Alberta