

June 6, 2007

Thank you for taking the time to write about your concerns regarding the waiting lists for services in the Ottawa area and the overall availability of midwifery services in Ontario. We are aware of the need to increase capacity within the province, and are grateful for the opportunity to let you know that efforts are being made through a variety of initiatives to improve access to important primary maternity care services.

While the College is not directly responsible for increasing access to midwifery services, we are committed to facilitating this within our scope as the regulatory body, and are working with other stakeholders - such as the Association of Ontario Midwives, the Midwifery Program at the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and the province's Midwifery Education Programs, including the International Midwifery Pre-registration Program - on this front.

Our mandate of public protection is the first and foremost factor in all of the work that we do. As a regulatory college we are responsible for Regulating the practice of the profession and governing members according to legislation, regulations, and by-laws; setting standards of qualification for persons to be issued certificates of registration; and developing, establishing, and maintaining standards of professional ethics for the members. In short: we ensure that the care being provided by midwives in Ontario is ethical, competent and of the highest quality possible.

Your frustration regarding a hospital decision to cease granting privileges to midwives is entirely understandable. As you likely know, hospitals in this province have an enormous amount of autonomy. This means that they have the authority to make decisions regarding what and how services they will provide. Unfortunately, the College of Midwives cannot do anything to address directly a particular hospital's decision regarding midwifery services. We do, however, continue to take advantage of every opportunity available to us to work with midwives, hospitals, and other maternity care stakeholders in an effort to ensure that women have access to their choice of maternity care provider and birthing location.

If you would like more specific information about the work that is being done, you might be interested in looking at some of the links within our website (listed below). Also, you might find the Ontario Maternity Care Expert Panel Report and the Multidisciplinary Collaborative Primary Maternity Care Project (MCP2) reports useful.

http://www.cmo.on.ca/docs/Executive_Report_FINAL.pdf

<http://www.mcp2.ca>

<http://www.cmo.on.ca/about.asp>

As a consumer, your views are important and the College very much appreciates that you are advocating for midwifery services. I hope that the information that I have provided is helpful. Please feel free to follow up if you have any further questions.

Regards,

Original Signed

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