

# Guideline for Midwife Certificatic Surgical First Assist for Cesarean Section

## Purpose

The College of Midwives of Ontario has developed this guideline for midwives and hospitals wishing to involve midwives as surgical first assistant for cesarean sections for midwifery clients.

College publications contain practice parameters and standards which should be considered by all Ontario midwives in the care of their clients and in the practice of the profession and related activities. College publications are developed in consultation with the profession and describe current professional expectations. It is important to note that these College publications may be used by the College or other bodies in determining whether appropriate standards of practice and professional responsibilities have been maintained.

## Guideline

This guideline provides recommendations so that midwives with special training in surgical first assist may scrub in to help the surgeon ensuring timely access to care in emergency, contributing to efficient use of human resources and promoting continuity of care.

Specialized practice certification in this competency area may be obtained through a course or program approved by the College of Midwives of Ontario that meets the requirements set out in this guideline.

Documentation of this specialized practice certification must be provided to and recognized by the hospital in which the midwife holds privileges, unless the hospital itself is administering the certification process.

If midwives are to perform any of the controlled acts in the course of assisting with cesarean sections, they must have the controlled act delegated by a physician pursuant to subsection 30(3) of the *Regulated Health Professions Act* (see the Federation of Health Regulatory College's *An Interprofessional Guide on the Use of Orders, Directives and Delegation for Regulated Health Professions in Ontario*).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://mdguide.regulatedhealthprofessions.on.ca/why/default.asp>

## **Certification**

The certification process may be carried out by a recognized midwifery or medical education program or hospital. The clinical experience portion must take place under supervision in an Ontario hospital. Upon successful completion of the certification process, proof of certification must be submitted to the College of Midwives of Ontario.

Specialized Practice Certification must include:

**Demonstration of theoretical and practical knowledge of:** indications for, and proper procedure and protocol for Surgical First Assist at cesarean birth.

**Demonstration of appropriate skills** in Surgical First Assist at cesarean birth will include:

- Attending in the role as surgical assist for at least 7 cesarean births<sup>2</sup> with an obstetrician/gynecologist.
- Attending in the role of surgical assist for at least 3 abdominal hysterectomies with an obstetrician/gynecologist.

Successful evaluation of competency by a supervising surgeon based upon a standardized competency framework.

After verifying the midwife's knowledge and skill through completion of study materials and the successful passing of written and/or oral and/or simulated or actual practical assessments, the certification process must include functioning with full competence at a **minimum of 10 surgical first assists under the supervision** of an obstetrician/gynecologist or general surgeon.

## **Recertification**

A recertification process may be needed if a midwife has not attended a minimum number of cesarean births as first assist over the course of a year.

The need for recertification will depend on the number of first assists performed by the midwife in the preceding 12 months. The College of Midwives of Ontario recommends recertification where the midwife has managed fewer than 2 first assists over that period unless she has significant prior experience.

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<sup>2</sup>

these do not have to be midwifery clients

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## **References**

American College of Nurse Midwives, Position Statement: The Certified Nurse-Midwife/Certified Midwife as First Assist at Surgery. May 1998.

American College of Nurse Midwives, QuickInfo: First Assist in Surgery, July 2006.

College of Midwives of British Columbia, Framework for Midwife Certification, June 2006.

Managing Complications in Pregnancy and Childbirth - a guide for midwives and doctors, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, Family and Community Health, World Health Organization (WHO) Geneva 2003.