

Standard:	VBAC and Choice of Birthplace
Reference #:	STCMO_C09252013
Approved by:	Council
Date Approved:	September 25, 2013
Date to be Reviewed:	April 2016
Revision date(s):	--
Effective date:	January 1, 2014
Attachments:	none



VBAC AND CHOICE OF BIRTHPLACE

Purpose

The purpose of this Position Statement is to articulate the College's position regarding choice of birthplace for women planning vaginal births after previous cesarean section.

Definition

For the purpose of this Position Statement, the CMO defines vaginal birth after cesarean section (VBAC) as a planned vaginal birth by a woman with a history of cesarean birth.

Background

Provided there are no contraindications (as generally agreed by the midwifery community in Ontario), midwives may provide primary care to clients with a history of one-previous transverse low-segment cesarean section. Midwives who care for clients with a history of more than one cesarean or an incision other than transverse low-segment are required to consult with a physician.

Position Statement

The CMO maintains that the most appropriate person to decide on place of birth for VBAC is the client, after carefully considering the risks and benefits of her options. In support of clients making informed decisions and midwives meeting the minimum requirements set out in CMO standards, the CMO expects midwives to provide primary care for clients planning VBAC in all settings, including home.

The CMO encourages midwives to work collaboratively with the obstetrical departments of their hospitals and referral hospitals to develop policies and protocols that, in the event of transport, are supportive of clients choosing home as a planned place of birth for VBAC.

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Choice of Birth

In accordance with CMO's *Informed Choice* standard, midwives are required to provide clients with all of the following information:

- The potential benefits and risks of VBAC and elective repeat cesarean section (ERCS).
- Relevant information regarding midwifery scope of practice and CMO standards.
- Relevant community standards, including AOM and SOGC clinical practice guidelines.
- Relevant research evidence, including the lack of clear evidence.
- Identification of the midwife's bias.
- Recommendations (if any) that are supported by evidence, CMO standards and community standards

Choice of Birthplace

Clients who choose VBAC are also in a position to consider out-of-hospital birth. In accordance with CMO's *Informed Choice* and *Home and Out-of-Hospital Birth* standards, midwives are required to provide clients with all of the following information:

- The potential benefits and risks to hospital vs. home (or other out-of-hospital) VBAC.
- Relevant information regarding midwifery scope of practice and CMO standards of care.
- Relevant community standards, including AOM and SOGC clinical practice guidelines.
- Relevant research evidence, including any deficiency of clear evidence.
- Identification of the midwife's bias.
- Recommendations (if any) that are supported by evidence, CMO standards and community standards.

Midwives are required to support their client's choice and fully document the discussion.