



Standard:	Informed Choice
Reference #:	STCMO_C09252013
Approved by:	Council
Date Approved:	September 25, 2013
Date to be Reviewed:	January 2016
Rescinded:	June 1, 2018
Effective date:	January 1, 2014
Attachments:	none

INFORMED CHOICE

Purpose

The purpose of this standard is to describe the requirements for midwives regarding informed choice discussions with clients.

Midwifery standards of practice refer to the minimum standard of professional behaviour and clinical practice expected of midwives in Ontario.

Definition

Informed choice is a collaborative information exchange between a midwife and her client that supports client decision-making. Informed choice is a fundamental principle of midwifery care in Ontario.

Standard

Midwives recognize the client as the primary decision-maker and shall facilitate the collaborative process of informed decision-making by:

- Fostering a relationship of trust and respect between midwife and client.
- Providing relevant information in a collaborative and non-authoritarian manner.
- Considering the experience, feelings, beliefs, values and preferences of the client.
- Making a best effort to ensure the client fully understands all relevant information prior to making a decision.
- Allowing adequate time for decision-making by the client.
- Supporting the client's decision.

Midwives are required to provide clients with the following information throughout the course of care as part of the informed choice process:

- The potential benefits, risks, and alternatives to procedures, tests and medications.
- Relevant information regarding midwifery scope of practice and CMO standards of care.



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- Relevant community standards.
- Relevant research evidence, including any deficiency of clear evidence.
- Identification of the midwife's bias, if significant.

Midwives shall, where appropriate, also provide clients with additional information, including:

- Recommendations that are supported by evidence, CMO standards and community standards.

Midwives must document all informed choice discussions, recommendations (if any) and the client's decision regarding her care. In the event a client chooses care outside of community standards, more extensive documentation should be considered in compliance with the Standard *When a Client Chooses Care outside Midwifery Standards*.

Emergency Situations

Any obstetrical or neonatal emergency that is reasonably anticipated should be discussed with the client in advance. In the event of an unforeseen obstetrical or neonatal emergency, the midwife shall make every effort to involve the client in decision-making when appropriate. When this cannot be achieved, the midwife should keep the client as informed and involved as possible. As soon as possible following the emergency event, a full discussion of the care provided shall take place with the client and shall be noted in the record.

Exceptional Situations

If there is a concern that the client may be incapacitated and cannot make informed decisions, the midwife should refer to the Health Care Consent Act and the CMO Health Care Consent Act Guideline 1996.

If the midwife determines that the choice of the client would require care outside midwifery standards or scope of practice, or would put the client at risk, she should refer to the CMO Standard *When a Client Chooses Care outside Midwifery Standards of Practice*.