

# WHEN A CLIENT CHOOSES CARE OUTSIDE MIDWIFERY STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

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## Purpose

The purpose of this standard is to set out the requirements to be followed by midwives to continue supporting a client who chooses care outside of midwifery standards of practice.

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

## Background

Midwifery clients may choose care that is outside midwifery standards of practice. For example, a client may decline care that the midwife considers essential for the provision of safe care, or the client may request care that the midwife is unable to safely manage.

It is important to respect the autonomy of those receiving health care and the rights of individuals to choose among alternative approaches, allowing them to weigh risk and benefits according to their needs and values. Midwives are responsible for being clear about their scope of practice and limitations, giving recommendations for care if appropriate and for informing clients about risks, benefits and alternative approaches.

## Standard

The following steps shall be followed in **non-emergency** situations and when it is reasonable to expect there is time to find a solution:

Client Chooses Care Outside of Midwifery Standards

Understand why the client is making the choice.	Explain why care is outside midwifery standards.	Try to address client's needs within midwifery standards.
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Consult with another midwife, physician, peer review group or ethicist

Share with the client the advice obtained through the consultation.



Consider the safest and most ethical course of action from the choices below

Document consultations and discussions in the client record.

Choice 1. Continue Providing care



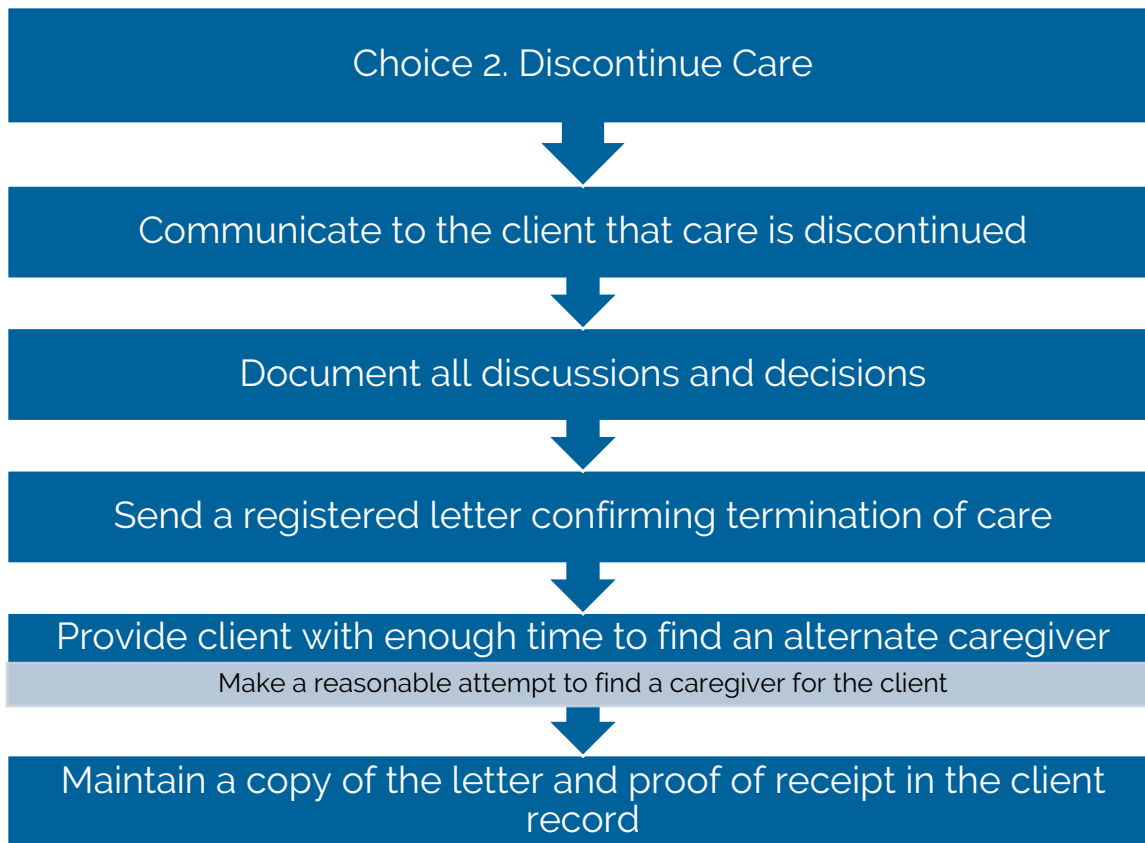
Continue making recommendations for safe care



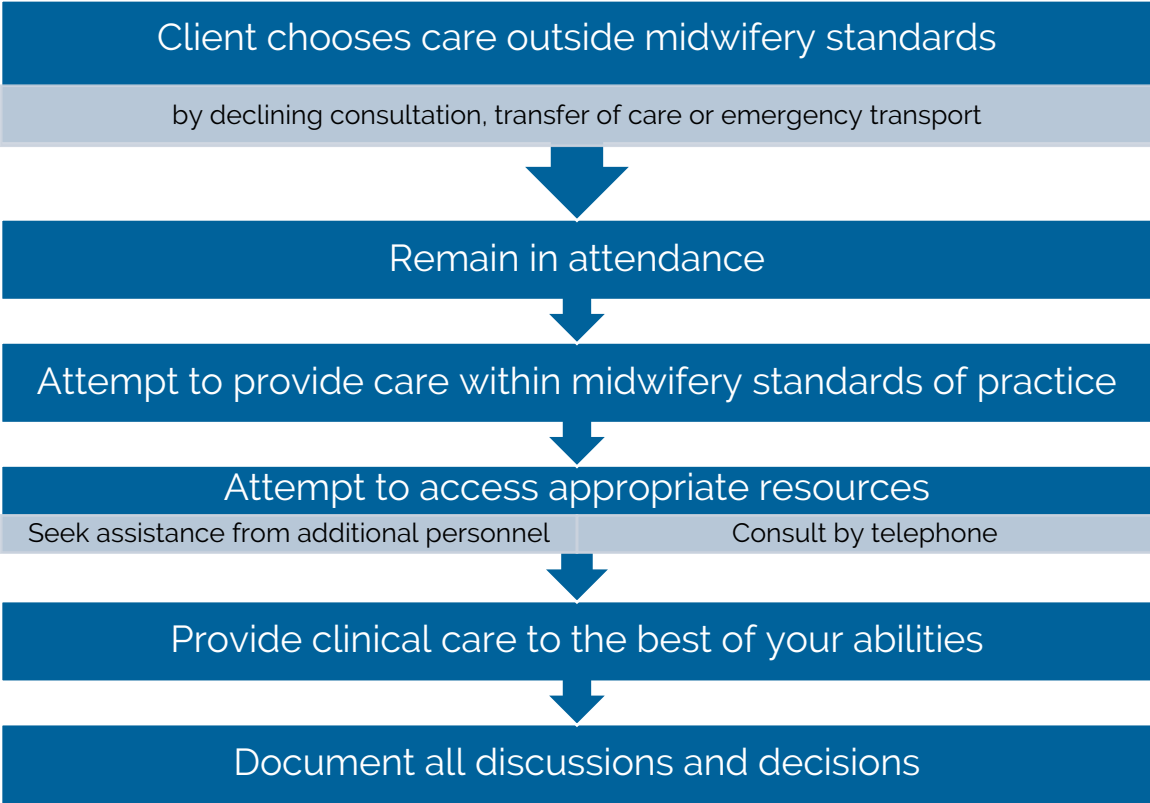
Inform colleagues who may become involved in care (e.g., hospital staff)



Document all discussions and decisions



In the **course of labour or urgent situations**, the midwife may not refuse to attend the client unless the previous steps to discontinue care and find alternate caregiver were *completed* prior to the onset of labour.



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