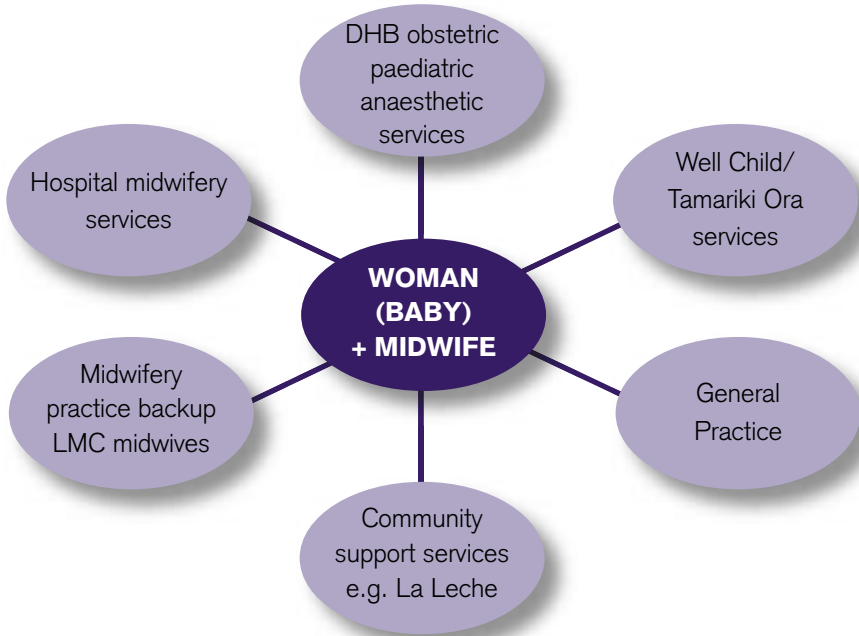




FACT SHEET 3

How New Zealand Midwives Work

Publicly funded, fully integrated, community and hospital based midwives



Who are midwives?

Midwives are regulated health professionals who specialise in providing care for women during pregnancy, labour, birth and up to six weeks after birth.¹

Midwives are registered with the Midwifery Council of New Zealand.

Midwives collaborate with other health professionals and support organisations as required by the woman.²

¹ Midwifery Council of New Zealand www.midwiferycouncil.health.nz/

² Maternity Consultation and Referral guidelines. Ministry of Health² Midwifery Standard Review- <http://www.midwife.org.nz/index.cfm/1,267,html>

There are more than 2800 midwives in NZ with a current practising certificate.
There is no longer a national shortage.

How are midwives educated?

Midwifery education in New Zealand meets international education standards.³

Midwifery is a 4 year equivalent, applied degree with a strong science base, and extensive clinical experience in hospital and in the community.

96% of graduates enter the Midwifery First Year of Practice Programme.⁴

Maternal and perinatal outcomes in New Zealand remain comparative with other developed countries.⁵

How midwives work?

Midwifery care is fully funded in New Zealand and free for all eligible, pregnant women.

Midwives cannot charge the woman for care. Their fees are set and paid for by the government.

70% of women register with a midwife in the first three months of pregnancy. This midwife (Lead Maternity Carer)⁶ will provide them with care until six weeks after the baby is born.

Midwives can work providing community based care as self employed Lead Maternity Carers or in hospital based maternity services as core midwives.

The vast majority of community midwives work in small practices (between 2-8 midwives). They or their backup provide 24 hour/ 7 day cover for women in their care.

Community midwives provide continuity of care for women from early pregnancy until the baby is six weeks old. They provide this care in the community and also in maternity facilities if that is where the woman gives birth. They work alongside the midwives and other health professionals employed by the maternity units.

Core midwives work shifts and provide 24 hour cover in a maternity hospital when women are inpatients. They support the community based midwifery workforce and often provide care for women who have more complex pregnancies.

Midwives are educated to recognise deviations from the normal when medical care, intervention and referral is necessary. Midwives work closely with doctors, other health professionals and community support agencies.

If a woman's care becomes more complex the woman's Lead Maternity Carer midwife consults with her colleagues in the maternity unit and together with the woman they decide who is best to now provide her care. The Referral Guidelines provide a framework for these discussions.⁷

3 <http://www.internationalmidwives.org/Documentation/ICMGlobalStandardsCompetenciesandTools/GlobalStandardsEnglish/tabid/980/Default.aspx>

4 Midwifery First Year of Practice Programme. <http://www.midwife.org.nz/index.cfm/1,171,html>

5 Perinatal and Maternal Mortality Review Committee Reports. <http://www.pmmrc.health.govt.nz/>

6 Lead Maternity Carer, Section 88 Maternity Notice. www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmth/section88-maternity-notice-2007-feb07

7 Guidelines for Consultation with Obstetric and Related Specialist medical Services (Referral Guidelines) Ministry of Health 2011. <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmth/guidelines-for-consultation-obstetric>