



NEW ZEALAND COLLEGE OF MIDWIVES (INC)

**Consensus Statement**  
***Roles and Responsibilities in the Hospital  
Setting***

*This Consensus Statement was ratified National Committee 2001*

All midwives have the right to autonomous practice.

The New Zealand College of Midwives expects that self employed and employed midwives will respect each other's right to autonomous practice and their accountability for that practice.

All midwives, whether employed or self employed, have a responsibility to communicate and decide their respective roles and responsibilities in relation to each woman's care while in the hospital setting.

A Lead Maternity Carer (LMC) midwife (whether employed or self-employed) is responsible for developing a care plan with her client. All care plans are documented and available for non-LMC employed midwives to refer to, thus enabling them to work in cooperation with the woman and her chosen Lead Maternity Carer.

When the Lead Maternity Carer is a general practitioner or an obstetrician, the midwife, whether employed or self-employed, remains responsible to the woman and to the midwifery profession for her midwifery care. The principle of cooperative planning and professional action remains the same regardless of who shares the care.

For women who do not choose a midwife as LMC, both employed and subcontracted midwives have a responsibility to develop a midwifery care plan in consultation with the woman and the LMC.

**References:**

Title NZCOM Midwives Handbook for Practice  
Source New Zealand College of Midwives, PO Box 21106, Christchurch

Title Maternity Services Notice, Section 88, July, 2002  
Source Ministry of Health, New Zealand

The purpose of New Zealand College of Midwives Consensus Statements is to provide women, midwives and the maternity services with the profession's position on any given situation. The guidelines are designed to educate and support best practice.  
All position statements are regularly reviewed and updated in line with evidence-based practice.