

Consensus Statement: **Mentoring**

The mentoring relationship is one of negotiated partnership between two registered midwives. Its purpose is to enable and develop professional confidence. Its duration and structure is mutually defined and agreed by each partner.

A mentor listens, challenges, supports and guides another midwife's work. A mentor does not always give answers but encourages the mentored midwife to research, explore and reflect on her practice.

The mentored midwife remains responsible and accountable for her own practice in accordance with statutory obligations of a registered midwife.

Guidelines:

Who is a mentor midwife?

A midwife who:

- is registered and currently practicing midwifery
- is willing to undertake the mentor role
- has demonstrated practice which reflects the midwifery model and has participated in the NZCOM Midwifery Standards Review

The kind of attributes needed in a mentor are:

- being a good listener and communicator
- having commitment to the development of midwifery practice
- knowing maternity services well and being up to date with changes taking place
- having the ability to work effectively in partnership with women

A successful mentor will:

- be available at regular intervals
- support efforts of the mentored midwife
- influence midwifery practice in a positive way
- help develop the mentored midwife's sense of confidence

The mentored midwife can expect the mentor to:

- challenge her on issues affecting her midwifery practice
- identify strengths and weaknesses
- assist with identifying ongoing educational and practice needs
- encourage her to become active in midwifery networks

Please Note:

The New Zealand College of Midwives' Ethics outline the midwife's responsibilities to colleagues and the profession. The College has no expectation that mentors receive financial benefits.

However:

- Any financial arrangements are optional and negotiated between the midwives concerned.
- Mentoring can be time-consuming. The mentor should have the time available to commit to the mentoring relationship.

References:

- ¹ Morton-Cooper A, Palmer A. (1993). *Mentoring and Preceptorship A Guide to Support Roles in Clinical Practice*. Blackwell Science Ltd, Australia.
- ² NZCOM Midwives Handbook for Practice. (2002.) New Zealand College of Midwives Christchurch
- ³ Karen Guilliland. (1998). The New Zealand Midwifery Mentor Partnership. In *The Mentor Connection in Nursing* Vance C, Olsen, R K (Eds). Pg 185-188, Springer Publishing Company.

Bibliography:

Health Services Equal Employment Opportunities Development Unit *Mentoring: An Aid to Career Development for Women*

Ratification:

*This Consensus Statement was ratified at National Committee meeting 27 September 2000
Original Statement 1996*

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.