

Health and Disability Services New Zealand Standard

(Draft for consultation)

Feedback from: New Zealand College of Midwives
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The New Zealand College of Midwives is the professional organisation for midwifery. Members are employed and self-employed and collectively represent more than 90% of the practising midwives in this country. The College offers information, education and advice to women, midwives, district health boards, health and social service agencies and the Ministry of Health regarding midwifery and maternity issues. Midwives interface with a multitude of other health professionals and agencies to support women to achieve the optimum outcome for their pregnancies, health and well-being.

Health and Disability Services NZ Standard (draft for consultation)

Thank you for providing the opportunity to give feedback on the draft New Zealand Health and Disability Services Standard.

The College has consulted with members to ensure a comprehensive response. We sought feedback specifically from the midwifery managers within District Health Board Maternity Services and from the managers of Primary Birthing Units.

Overall, the feedback has been positive and the College of Midwives is happy to support the changes to the proposed NZ standards. We consider the aim to provide a more person and whānau centred approach within health service standards and focus on empowered decision making, consideration of outcomes of care and the Te Tiriti o Waitangi relationship between the Crown and Māori is an important aspiration.

We are supportive of the 5 principles (Achieving Māori health equity, Accessible health and disability services, Partners with choice and control, Best practice through collaboration and Standards that increase positive life outcomes) which have been used as the foundation for the revised standards.

We have reviewed both the Criteria and Sector solutions identified within the draft, although we understand that the Criteria will be set out as a separate document to the Sector solutions to allow for more frequent updates to reflect changes to care and evolving evidence.

The NZ standards have identified that professional codes of practice, evidence informed practice, professional standards and professional and national guidelines are recognised and should be reflected within service provision and delivery. As the professional body of NZ registered midwives, the College promotes midwifery standards of practice, and guides midwifery quality of care through professional guidance. Working in partnership with women, supporting cultural safety, and informed decision making is a fundamental expectation of midwifery practice (New Zealand College of Midwives, 2015). The proposed updated NZ standard will reflect the expectation that the College has for its members and should enhance and support quality of care throughout the NZ health service.

Specific feedback

We have reviewed the standards to identify the impact on midwives working within maternity services in DHBs and birthing units. We support the definition of a birthing unit as: *a primary maternity facility providing a physical setting for assessment, labour and birth and postnatal care by the LMC or DHB funded primary maternity services provider. It may be a stand-alone facility or unit within a level 1 or 2 general hospital as defined in the NZ Role Delineation Model.*

Section 1: Our rights

We support the rights-based approach to health care and agree with identifying these within the NZ standard. We consider the criteria identifying that each person will receive information in their preferred format and manner that is useful for them to be of particular importance. Within maternity services this includes the need to promote te reo Māori and tikanga Māori throughout health, along with the provision of information in a way that enables understanding, which may necessitate the use of interpreters and written information in a variety of languages and accessible formats due to the diversity of the maternity population.

Section 2: Workforce and structure

We support the concept of people receiving quality services through effective governance and a supported workforce. An area that we consider of major importance is Section 2.3 (service management) with its requirement that service providers ensure a clear rationale for determining health care workers' capacity and capability to provide culturally and clinically safe service delivery. For maternity services the requirement to use existing guidance is useful along with the reference to the Midwifery Employee Representation and Advisory Services (MERAS) Safe Staffing standards. We believe that safe, culturally appropriate and high quality health care can only be achieved when there are sufficient qualified health care professionals available to provide that care.

Another area we believe to be significant is that of health care providers being provided with an opportunity to debrief and discuss care following incidents. Having this identified within the NZ Standard is helpful. Debriefing when done well can support improved collaboration, understanding of roles, supportive relationships and improved wellbeing for all health professionals involved in an incident. This ultimately supports workforce retention in the longer term.

Section 3: Pathways to wellbeing

We support the concept of ensuring that people and their whānau are able to participate in the development of their own pathways to wellbeing, able to receive timely assessment and services that are planned, co-ordinated and provided in a manner that is tailored to their needs and support their wellbeing. Within midwifery we support midwives to develop care plans with their clients and note that these will continue to be supported through this criteria.

Section 4: Person-centred and safe environment

We agree that all health services should be provided in a safe environment for the clients of that service and for the health professionals providing care within that environment.

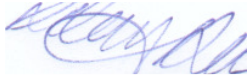
Section 5: Infection prevention and antimicrobial stewardship

We support the importance of ensuring there are clear strategies for preventing infection and ensuring antimicrobial stewardship within health care.

Summary

We consider that that the standards are comprehensive and will improve quality as well as supporting clarity and consistency for all health services and health practitioners within New Zealand. We would like to commend the P8134 Committee, Standards NZ, and the Ministry of Health for their commitment to improving public health service standards and for their detailed work on this document.

Ngā mihi,



Lesley Dixon
Midwifery Advisor

References

New Zealand College of Midwives. (2015). *Midwives Handbook for Practice* (5th ed.). Christchurch: New Zealand College of Midwives.