

EDITORIAL

He waka eke noa We are all in this together!

Ruth Martis and Lorna Davis, sub-editors

The whakataukī (Māori proverb) above has particular resonance for us as midwives as we head toward the end of yet another challenging year of the Covid-19 pandemic.

This whakataukī reminds us that working in unity and paddling in rhythm are essential when, as a profession, we are all sitting in the same waka (canoe). If the waka moves faster in the rapids, we may feel anxious about the possibility of falling out but we have to trust the person who is guiding the waka to navigate us to the desired destination. This is not always easy to do when we feel out of our depth but, as the familiar midwifery mantra states, sometimes we have to “trust the process”.

The message in the whakataukī can be applied to the current situation in midwifery. At a time when there is uncertainty in the midst of a pandemic, midwives in Aotearoa New Zealand have shown incredible courage, determination and commitment to providing excellent midwifery care for wāhine, hapū and whānau. This is the 57th issue of the College Journal and it showcases the tenacity of midwives in producing interesting, evidence-based and informative research during challenging times. The articles are diverse and serve to increase the growing body of midwifery research in Aotearoa New Zealand.

- The first study published in 2021 demonstrates the role of Aotearoa New Zealand midwives as positive influencers on food literacy with Samoan families.
- The next study explores what happens for women when an ultrasound scan predicts the presence of a large baby in pregnancy and the concern of pathologising large babies for questionable benefits.
- The study that examines the experiences of a Midwife Acupuncturist in caring for women with antenatal anxiety and depression (AAD) shows promising results for acupuncture as an adjunct to usual treatment for AAD.
- The qualitative comparative study that follows considers women’s experiences in accessing midwifery care, encouraging midwives to reflect and review how they provide care in the community.
- A literature review about the microbiota of the vulva and vagina reminds the reader that caring for the vulva and vagina by washing with water is evidence-based practice and promotes the integrity of vulval skin, supports physiological self-cleaning of the vagina and optimises the protective function of the vulvo-vaginal microbiota.
- The last study published in the 2021 series ends this challenging year on a high note. The study explores and defines effective collaboration between midwives and obstetricians at the primary/secondary interface



Ruth Martis



Lorna Davis

in maternity care. We all know interprofessional communication is a critical component of safe maternity care and it is not surprising that the findings of this study identify that effective three-way communication promotes good maternity care.

This collection of research articles is a timely reminder that, even in the face of adversity, Aotearoa New Zealand midwives still rise to the challenge of producing quality research that is both relevant to our unique maternity setting and supports our midwifery community to “paddle” together through these challenging times. He waka eke noa.

Wishing you a peaceful and restful holiday season from the Editorial Team.

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