Consensus statement:

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Midwifery Practice

Updated, awaiting ratification

New Zealand College of Midwives
Te Kāreti o ngā Kaiwhakawhānau ki Aotearoa

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Please note that due to the rapidly developing nature of artificial intelligence technologies this statement is likely to be updated as new considerations arise

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Tauākī | Statement

The New Zealand College of Midwives | Te Kāreti o ngā Kaiwhakawhānau ki Aotearoa (the College) considers that artificial intelligence (AI) technologies (including AI assisted transcription tools, decision-support systems, diagnostic tools, Large Language Models, and general generative AI applications) may support midwifery practice when used safely, ethically, and in ways that uphold midwives' professional judgement, cultural safety, and the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

> *AI tools must complement, not replace, the relational, evidence-informed, and mana-enhancing care that midwives provide to women, gender diverse people and their whānau.*

Te Reo | Language

College statements use words from te reo Māori to acknowledge and respect the indigenous language of Aotearoa New Zealand. Concepts such as whanaungatanga, mana, hauora, and whakapapa reflect core midwifery values and emphasise the interconnectedness of relationships, family, identity, and wellbeing.

Honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Midwifery practice in Aotearoa is guided by the cultural competencies of Tūranga Kaupapa (Ngā Māia Trust, 2024). Tūranga Kaupapa honours a Tiriti-based partnership and is foundational in providing care to whānau Māori. Midwives work in

ways that uphold the mana of all whānau, recognising the role of cultural identity, values and belief systems in shaping health experiences (New Zealand College of Midwives, 2025).

Midwives are required to reflect on their own practice and to engage in ongoing education that strengthens cultural safety and cultural competence (New Zealand College of Midwives, 2025).

When integrating AI technologies into practice, midwives should be aware that AI tools and processes may be inherently biased according to the material they were trained with, which can disadvantage or make some communities' realities invisible. Gaining informed consent from whānau for the use of AI tools in practice is required for whānau to exercise tino rangatiratanga over their reo and health information. AI tools do not, in themselves, create cultural safety; culturally safe care continues to depend on the midwife's relational practice, critical reflection, and responsiveness to the aspirations and needs of whānau.

The importance of whakawhanaungatanga in midwifery practice cannot be undermined by introduction of AI technologies, and it is important to ensure use of reo Māori does not create confusion or inaccuracy in clinical documentation.

Whakamārama | Background

Artificial intelligence use has rapidly expanded across health and social service settings in Aotearoa. In midwifery, AI tools may be used to support administrative efficiency, assessment and diagnosis, clinical decision making, communication, education, and documentation (e.g., transcription of clinical notes).

However, AI technologies also present risks. These include concerns about:

- Privacy and data governance, including compliance with the Privacy Act 2020, Health Information Privacy Code (HIPC) 2020, and secure information sharing and storage requirements.
- Algorithmic bias, particularly in relation to Māori, Pasifika, disabled people, migrants and other populations who experience inequity.
- Māori data sovereignty being undermined.
- Inaccuracy and unreliability, including risks of incorrect summaries, fabricated information, fraudulent documents, and mistrust of legitimate documentation.
- Erosion of critical thinking and clinical judgement when AI outputs are used uncritically.
- Technology detracting from relational midwifery care, impacting communication and cultural safety.

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- Informed consent, including ensuring women and whānau understand what AI is used for and how their information is managed.

- Inequitable access to digital technologies, both in terms of cost and users' skill levels.

Midwifery practice remains grounded by its key frameworks and legislation, all of which are relevant when considering AI in relation to protecting privacy, maintaining professional judgement, upholding cultural safety and fostering trusting relationships. These include the Midwifery Scope of Practice, the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights (1996), the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (HPCAA) 2003, Midwifery Council Competencies, the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) Essential Competencies for Midwifery Practice, and New Zealand College of Midwives Standards of Practice. Together, these frameworks emphasise that midwives must critically analyse, appropriately adopt, and safely use new and emerging technologies, including AI-supported tools, within the scope of midwifery practice. AI must be integrated in ways that strengthen, not diminish relational midwifery care, cultural safety, and equity in health outcomes.

Given the rapid development of AI technologies, this statement will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains current and aligned with emerging evidence, Te Tiriti obligations, and regulatory guidance.

Ngā Aratohu | Guidance for practice

These practice guidance points are consistent with the ICM Essential Competencies, which require midwives to adapt to and adopt new and emerging technologies that enhance midwifery practice, critically analyse their impact, and ensure consent and data protection when using digital and AI-supported technologies (ICM, 2024)

AI transcription and documentation tools

- Prioritise relational, culturally safe care, ensuring AI does not interrupt whakawhānaungatanga or kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) practice.

- All midwives should consult the latest guidance from Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora to guide appropriate use of AI technologies within clinical practice

- Health NZ approved tools must comply with the Privacy Act 2020, HIPC 2020, and relevant health information legislation, and must have clear assurances regarding secure data storage, access, and secondary use of data.

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- Informed consent for the use of devices and AI tools to record, transcribe, or process consultations must be explicitly obtained prior to their use for each consultation. Provide alternatives for those who do not wish to have AI technologies used in their care or documentation.
- Midwives are accountable for all clinical documentation and communication. Treat AI outputs as supplementary only and verify accuracy before adding it to clinical documentation.
- Accept full professional accountability for clinical decisions and all documentation. All documentation generated by AI which is included in clinical documentation must be dated and signed as per usual clinical documentation standards (New Zealand College of Midwives 2022).
- Protect privacy, confidentiality, and uphold Māori data sovereignty when using AI tools.
- Maintain competence by engaging in ongoing education on safe and ethical AI use.
- Report concerns or adverse outcomes related to AI use through appropriate organisational channels.
- The College recommends that all midwives understand how long audio recordings and transcripts are retained within their system (including any automatic deletion policies) and have a clear process for reviewing and securely deleting these once midwifery documentation has been reviewed, approved, and transferred to the clinical record.
- Be aware that all information held within AI transcription tools (including any available audio recordings or raw transcripts) may be considered evidence within serious incident review processes. Additionally, under the Privacy Act 2020, women are entitled to request a copy of any information held about them.

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Current position of Health New Zealand

At present, Health NZ recommends a precautionary approach to generative AI and large language models because the risks and benefits in the Aotearoa health context have not yet been fully evaluated.

- Midwives must follow current Health NZ policies and guidance on the use of generative AI and AI-enabled transcription tools, and keep up to date as these are revised.
- The Midwifery and Maternity Providers Organisation (MMPO) has developed Tiaki Scribe, an Aotearoa-based AI transcription tool for community midwives, which has been approved by Health NZ for extended pilot use within midwifery practice. It is currently being reviewed by Health NZ's assurance process for final approval

To access the most current advice from Health NZ, go to https://www.healthnz.govt.nz/health-professionals/guidance-standards/topic/digital-technologies/using-generative-ai-and-large-language-models

AI tools for other uses

AI tools are increasingly used for many other purposes, most commonly online information searches.

- Never enter identifiable clinical information into AI tools which do not meet health data requirements in Aotearoa.
- Recognise that information generated from AI searches can be inaccurate and must be checked and verified before being used to inform practice or share with women and whānau.
- Be aware that online AI search tools are inherently biased, which can provide information that disadvantages or renders invisible populations that experience inequity.
- Use AI in ways that uphold mana, promote equity, and support culturally safe practice as guided by Tūranga Kaupapa.
- Use of AI technologies within educational institutions and academic work must be disclosed, and usage must abide by the guidelines of the relevant academic institution

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Organisational and System Responsibilities

The College encourages maternity service providers, Health NZ| Te Whatu Ora, and community midwifery organisations to:

- Provide access to secure, compliant AI tools.
- Establish clear policies and education.
- Engage Māori partners and consumers in the evaluation and codesign of AI systems.
- Promote AI use that strengthens equity and respects tino rangatiratanga.
- Provide education and practical support for midwives (including those less familiar with digital tools) to promote equitable, safe, and confident use of AI technologies.

Ngā kupu | Glossary

Term	Definition
Artificial Intelligence (AI)	The capability of computational systems to perform tasks typically associated with human intelligence, such as learning, reasoning, problem solving, perception and decision making.
Generative AI	Prompt-based, general purpose AI built on very large datasets. Generative AI may be text-only (large language models) or multimodal, accepting text, image, audio or video inputs and producing similar outputs.
Large Language Models (LLM)	Generative AI algorithms used to generate text-based content. LLMs are pretrained on extremely large datasets of written human language and generate text based on probabilistic predictions.

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Rārangi Tohutoro | References

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Whakamana | Ratification

This statement (uploaded October 2026) will be ratified at the College's AGM in 2027. This statement replaces the previous version, ratified 29 July 2026.

Arotake | Review – August 2027

The purpose of the College guidance statements is to provide midwives, women, whānau and the maternity services with the profession's position on any given situation and provide guidance for practice. This guidance is designed to educate and support best practice and is regularly reviewed and updated in line with evidence-based practice.

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Please note: Statements may be updated within the review period. We recommend midwives refer to the College website for the most up-to-date versions. https://www.midwife.org.nz/midwives/professional-practice/guidance-for-practice/

Tūtohu | Suggested citation

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