

Q&A

Most Popular Questions About **MIDWIFERY SERVICES**

How can patients access a Midwife?

No referrals are needed, patients can self-refer and start the application process. Patients can call Midwifery clinic at **902-288-1482** or go to Government of PEI website and search under Midwifery. <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/midwifery-services> and start the referral process themselves.

Or referral can be made by practitioners directly through CERNER or CHR.

Where do Midwives work?

HPEI Midwifery services is a provincial program. Midwives currently work out of their clinic is at The Mount, and out of QEH for labour and delivery if a client chooses. A second practice location is planned for Summerside.

Midwives also provide care within a patient's home.

Do Midwives have formal education?

Midwives complete a minimum of a four-year degree in midwifery, or equivalent. Because programs are very competitive to get into, many midwives have other degrees and higher education such as a master's degree. On average at graduation a midwifery graduate from their program they will have acquired 1000 hrs of clinical practice and supported up to 30 Births on average.

Midwives on PEI are currently licensed to practice as Registered Midwives and are governed by the College of Registered Nurses and Midwives.

Do midwives work with nurses and physicians together?

Like nurse practitioners and physicians in primary care services, midwives are considered primary care providers for low-risk pregnancy and birth. They work collaboratively with other members of the maternity care team, such as obstetrical and neonatal nurses, public health nurses, nurse practitioners, family physicians, registered nurses, obstetricians, neonatologists, pediatricians, lactations consultants and others such as social workers and mental health workers.

When women have a midwife, do they have access to a doctor when needed?

Midwives work collaboratively with all members of the health care team. Midwives consult and refer to physicians and other providers, as necessary. Where a patient does not have a designated primary care provider the Midwife will discharge from care at 8 weeks postpartum. Newborns at 8 weeks will be transitioned to other services as per usual including PHN and unaffiliated prenatal clinic following the 8 week postpartum period follow up care in scope for midwives.

Do Midwives only do births?

Midwives provide care before and throughout pregnancy, during labour and delivery and after delivery up to 8 weeks. As well, they provide newborn care, and other aspects of reproductive care.

Midwives also offer pre-conception care, fertility support, prenatal classes, and lactation support.



Health PEI

Learn more about midwives at
PrinceEdwardIsland.ca/Midwifery.ca

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Can Midwives administer pain medication?

Midwives are trained and permitted to administer certain pain medications in accordance with their regulations.

Is Midwifery care as safe as physician care?

Midwives are experts in low-risk pregnancy and childbirth and evidence has shown that midwifery care is as safe as other forms of maternity care.

Are Midwives and Doulas the same thing?

A birth doula is trained in providing non-medical labour support, both physical and emotional, to a labouring woman and her partner. Doulas do not provide medical or midwifery care or assist births; they can provide a wide range of comfort measures to a woman in labour. Their services are unlicensed and uninsured as a health service; women must find and pay for doula services themselves.

Do you still have pregnancy screenings and ultrasounds when working with a midwife?

Midwives are primary care providers and can order lab tests/ultrasounds and prescribe medications.

What would happen if I developed a complication during my pregnancy? Would my care be transferred to an OB?

Midwives are experts in low-risk, healthy pregnancies. When complications/conditions outside of a midwife's scope arise, a midwife will consult with the appropriate health provider to ensure a client gets the care needed.

In some cases, even with a complication a midwife can continue to provide client's support in collaboration with HCPs.

Is there a waitlist to get paired with a Midwife?

There is an application process as not all patients who apply are eligible to obtain midwifery care for a variety of reasons. Examples include high-risk pregnancies and pre-existing health concerns outside of a midwife's scope of practice. However, it is best that the patients speak to a midwife directly to determine eligibility.

What does prenatal care look like with a midwife?

Patients will have about the same number of prenatal checks, as with other care providers to ensure optimal maternal and fetal outcomes. However, midwifery appointments are often longer to provide time for birth planning, informed choice discussions, and so clients can form a comfort level with their midwife.

Outside of clinic visits midwives provide 24/7 standby coverage for concerns that arise. Midwives can order tests and prescribe medications, and care can occur in a variety of settings.

What does postpartum care look like under the care of a midwife?

Midwives care for their clients and newborns for up to 8 weeks postpartum. This care generally involves 3 home visits in the first week, with the client/newborn returning to the clinic for visits at 2, 4, and 6 weeks postpartum. The midwife remains on standby 24/7 for additional concerns and can arrange additional in person visits as needed.

Do I pay any fees for the services?

On PEI Midwifery care is covered through Health PEI and those who qualify must have current provincial government funded health care coverage.