



CMRC Diversity Statement

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Background

Diversity is a cornerstone of midwifery practice in Canada. Honouring diversity means recognizing the factors that contribute to each individual's unique social location including, but not limited to, their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, mental health, age, migrant experience, geographical location, language, socio-economic status and/or spiritual or religious beliefs (Heritage Canada, 2004).

Midwifery is a profession that respects the diversity of women's needs and the variety of personal and cultural meanings that women, families and communities bring to the pregnancy, birth and early parenting experience.

The International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) believes that culture, tradition, and individual beliefs influence how one lives and makes life-choices. The ICM believes that midwives and the women and families they care for deserve respect and the freedom to participate fully and knowledgeably in decisions that affect their lives (ICM, 2005).

All organizational and professional midwifery practice can place value on diversity, both in fostering the diversity of the midwifery population, and in ensuring that midwifery practitioners have the capacity to serve a diverse client population.

Statement of Belief

The Canadian Midwifery Regulators Consortium's (CMRC) mandate is to protect the child-bearing public. Within that mandated legal framework, CMRC recognizes the importance of fostering diversity among midwives, and in fostering the preparation of midwives to serve a diverse population.

Following its recognition of the value of a diverse midwifery population, CMRC believes that midwifery training should be accessible to everyone. Accessible training includes access to culturally-inclusive midwifery programs (with a particular emphasis on indigenous cultures) and supporting a means for internationally educated midwives (IEMs) to become certified in Canada.

To adequately serve a diverse population of women, CMRC recognizes the importance of cultural safety in midwifery training and practice. Cultural safety, as defined by Te Tatau o te Whare Kahu (2005), means that the care of women from all cultures will be undertaken by a midwife who has had the opportunity to reflect upon her own cultural identity and realizes the impact of her culture on her practice. The practice of cultural safety ensures that the well-being and cultural identity of midwives and clients will be honoured, valued, and empowered.

¹ This Statement was approved at a May 2008 CMRC meeting, pending approval of the regulatory board in Quebec which was expected after they reviewed the French language version. In the meantime, it was implemented in programming decisions including with the CMRC's Multi-jurisdictional Midwifery Bridging project. Approval from Quebec's Ordre was received in January 2011.

CMRC values cultural safety training for all persons involved in midwifery practice, the regulation of midwifery and the education of midwives.

Position

CMRC and its member organizations are actively working together to develop fair and ethical assessment and orientation processes for IEMs through its Multi-Jurisdictional Bridging Project. CMRC encourages all midwifery stakeholders in Canada to support diversity and the practice of cultural safety.

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