



CMRC Position Statement on the Protected Title of “Midwife”

The CMRC is aware that there are individuals and organizations using the title of “*midwife*” to describe the services they provide. A recent example is the title of “death midwife” used by individuals to describe the service they provide throughout the human process of dying, death and grief. The CMRC wishes to clarify that the title of “*midwife*” is a protected title.

In 10 of the 13 Canadian provinces/territories, the title “*midwife*” is protected by legislation (through an ‘act’ or ‘regulation’(s)). It is a title that is defined in the legislation which exclusively reserves the title of ‘midwife’ for those individuals who are registered with a regulatory authority which has the legislative mandate to ensure that persons using the title “*midwife*” meet the specific standards prescribed by regulation to provide clients with midwifery/maternity care; typically during preconception, pregnancy, labour, birth and the postpartum period up to six weeks, including newborn care to six weeks.

Governments have made a clear decision to protect the title “*midwife*” to assure members of the public that persons using this title are duly registered with a regulatory authority, and are accountable to the standards, guidelines, policies and code of ethics of that regulatory authority. A person who chooses to use a title such as “death midwife” is not educated, trained, or experienced to provide midwifery/maternity care and therefore does not meet the legislative definition of a “*midwife*”. Furthermore, such persons are not monitored or held accountable by a regulatory authority.

The CMRC supports those regulators that may decide that, in order to ensure that the title is used exclusively by those individuals who provide midwifery/maternity care and who are registered with a regulatory authority it is necessary to take legal action against an organization or individual who inappropriately uses the title of “*midwife*”.

April 2016