



## **INFORMED CHOICE AGREEMENT**

We are providing you with this information so that you will be aware of the services we provide. Midwifery care requires a relationship of trust and respect, where you are confident of the midwife's judgment and skills. The responsibility for health and well-being rests not only with caregivers, but also with each individual. You will make decisions and choices regarding your pregnancy and birth. Your midwife will support these choices and ensure that you have the information and education to make appropriate decisions.

### **OUR PRACTICE AND MODEL OF CARE**

Midwives are primary caregivers for women during pregnancy, labour and the postpartum period. We also care for newborns until six weeks after birth. Our practice includes registered midwives and midwifery students and we provide complete care for healthy pregnant women living in Mississauga and the surrounding area.

All midwives in Ontario are registered with the College of Midwives of Ontario (CMO) and are qualified primary care providers for healthy pregnancies and newborns. The scope of practice for midwives is determined by CMO standards.

Our practice follows a team-based model of care, with each client usually having a team of two or three midwives who see them alternately at each visit. One of your midwives will plan to be in attendance at your birth. **Although we are strongly committed to continuity of care and try to ensure that one of your designated midwives are present at the birth, sometimes circumstances will prevent this from occurring.**

### **ON AND OFF CALL TIME**

Your midwives are on call and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for labour and urgent concerns. Each midwife regularly takes scheduled time off call per month.

**ALTHOUGH MIDWIVES ARE ON CALL AND CAN BE REACHED BY PAGER 24 HOURS A DAY, WE ASK THAT YOU ONLY USE THIS SERVICE FOR LABOUR AND URGENT CONCERNS.**

**FOR ALL NON-URGENT CONCERNS, PLEASE CALL OR LEAVE A MESSAGE AT THE OFFICE. YOUR CONCERN WILL BE IMMEDIATELY TRIAGED AND PRIORITIZED TO ENSURE THAT SOMEONE WILL CALL YOU BACK AS APPROPRIATE.**

### **PRENATAL CARE**

Regular prenatal care has been shown to improve the health of women and their babies. Each week, one midwife from your team will be in the office to provide the appointments for the team's

clients. This will ensure that appointments are available with some flexibility for you and that clinic is not cancelled due to births. We expect to see all clients once a month until the 28th week of pregnancy, every second week until the 36th week, and once a week thereafter until the baby is born.

During your prenatal visits you will have the opportunity to learn about the changes your body goes through as the pregnancy progresses. Our care includes monitoring your blood pressure, the growth of the baby, the baby's heart rate and position, urinalysis, assessment of your general health and that of the baby. We order routine tests including genetic screening, ultrasound and bloodwork, as required.

If you developed any complications in previous pregnancies, we request that you obtain records of your birth from the midwife or physician who provided your care. If you develop any complications during your current pregnancy, we will refer you to the appropriate specialist for a consultation and in some cases care will be transferred to the specialist.

Your family and friends are welcome to attend clinic with you. If you are planning to have your children at the birth, we suggest that you bring them to meet us. When a homebirth is planned, the midwives will visit your home to become familiar with the location.

## **LABOUR AND BIRTH**

Our care in labour includes telephone support in early labour and continuous support during active labour. Two midwives will be present for the birth and immediate postpartum. Midwives monitor the progress of labour, conduct the delivery of the baby and provide immediate postpartum care for the mom and newborn, including suturing if necessary and a newborn exam. If complications develop in labour or during the birth, your midwife will consult and/or transfer care to the appropriate specialist as indicated.

We also provide help with breastfeeding, give emotional support and give information and guidance to the woman and her support people. In situations where birth plans change in labour, we continue to provide you with information about your options and give support to help you make decisions.

## **POSTNATAL CARE**

In most circumstances, women are encouraged to go home 3-4 hours after a hospital birth. Following home birth, midwives will remain to monitor women and their newborns for the first 3 to 4 hours. We will be out to visit you at home the following day and see you at regular visits following the birth of your baby. We continue to provide care for you and the baby until 6 weeks postpartum.

Any routine tests or treatment required by yourself or the baby in the first six weeks will be administered by your midwives. Any concerns that arise during your postnatal period should be referred to your midwife who will either address those concerns herself or refer you on to the appropriate specialist.

## **CHOICE OF BIRTHPLACE**

Women in our care may choose to have their babies at home or hospital. There will be times when based on your history or clinical condition, a hospital birth would be recommended by your

midwife. We encourage you to take the opportunity to discuss your choice of birthplace with your midwives. If you are planning a hospital birth, we attend births at Trillium Health Partner's, Mississauga Site and Credit Valley Site. Although we try our best to accommodate your preference of hospitals, some circumstances may require you to labour and deliver at an alternate hospital.

### **INFORMED CHOICE**

We encourage women to actively participate in decision making around their pregnancy, birth and postpartum. We view our role as providing information to assist you in making these important decisions.

A midwife's care is individualized according to your needs. In order to be effective as caregivers, it is important that you keep us well informed of problems or situations that may affect your care.

### **STUDENTS**

As a practice, we are firmly committed to the growth of midwifery in Ontario. We feel that it is important to educate new midwives as the demand for midwifery services increases. Our practice is a teaching practice and participates in the education and supervision of midwifery students. You will meet and get to know the students in our practice during your pregnancy. Students are involved in all aspects of midwifery care and are expected to be present at prenatal and postpartum visits and at the birth. Students are always supervised and participate in your care to varying degrees depending on their level of study. For further information about student involvement please see the Student Informed Choice Package.

### **PRENATAL CLASSES**

Prenatal classes are strongly recommended for all first time mothers and their partners. We can provide you with information on prenatal classes in your area. Classes cover a wide range of issues including: risk assessment, nutrition, normal labour and delivery, relaxation and breathing techniques, complications and emergencies, psychological concerns, postpartum issues, breastfeeding and early parenting.

### **CLIENT RECORDS**

Although all midwifery records are the property of the practice, you may have access to them at any time.

The Ministry of Health, Ontario Midwifery Program, as well as the agency which funds your care needs to gather information about who is using midwifery services. You will be asked to sign a release form to allow us to provide your name and health card number to these agencies.