

Keep On

The Midwifery Coalition of Nova Scotia has been working for over 25 years to have midwifery accepted as part of Nova Scotia's health system and to have midwifery care covered by MSI. Legislation is a big step forward and in the long term, a very good thing for women, babies and families.

We've worked hard to get this far but we've still got a way to go before midwifery services are available to all and accepted as an everyday part of maternity care in our province. This is no time to stop advocating for access to the "gold standard" of primary maternity care.

mcns.chebucto.org

District Health Authorities not yet offering midwifery services

Annapolis Valley Health Authority

www.avdha.nshealth.ca

Cape Breton District Health Authority

www.cbdha.nshealth.ca

Colchester East Hants Health Authority

www.cehha.nshealth.ca

Cumberland Health Authority

www.cha.nshealth.ca

Pictou County Health Authority

www.pcha.nshealth.ca

(Community Health Board link is currently under construction)

South West Nova Health

www.swndha.nshealth.ca

Locations of the first three Midwifery Model Sites

Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority

www.erbh.nshealth.ca

South Shore Health

www.ssdha.nshealth.ca

IWK Health Centre

www.iwk.nshealth.ca

(The IWK Health Centre handles maternity care for Capital Health:

www.cdha.nshealth.ca



THE MIDWIFERY COALITION
OF NOVA SCOTIA

Midwifery Everywhere

The Issue

Now that the Midwifery Act is proclaimed and has become effective, several things have happened:

Midwifery is now a legal, regulated, publicly funded service.

Midwifery services will be available in three model sites
the IWK in HRM
the South Shore District Health Authority; and
GASHA (Guysborough, Antigonish, Strait Health Authority).

It has now become illegal to practice midwifery without a license. And to get a license, a midwife will need (among other things) to have liability insurance. At the moment, the only realistic way she can get this is by being an employee of one of the three Model Midwifery Sites.

What this means for women is that some of us will have access to midwifery care, but many more won't. This will be especially painful for women who have previously had access to midwifery care, but will now lose it because of where they live. Even in the three model sites, it's unlikely that there will be enough midwives to meet the demand, once women know that the service is available-the government has funded just seven full-time equivalent midwives for the model sites.

How to get midwifery services in your District

What can you do to bring midwifery services to your community sooner rather than later? Or if you live in one of the DHAs with a model site, what can you do to encourage the expansion of midwifery services?

Contact your MLA

Government policy determines what services get funded and supported. Let your MLA know that midwifery is important to you and your community. Ask what they plan to do to make this service available to you in the short term-for example, could they advocate to enable women who want midwifery care to travel to another DHA to receive it? Could they urge the government to assist private practice midwives who are willing to work in unserved areas to pay for the required insurance?

In the long term, what can they do to encourage the government to support the DHAs financially to enable them to introduce midwifery?

You'll find contact information for all MLAs at:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/members>

Contact the Minister of Health

Midwifery is being integrated in Nova Scotia as part of an overall expansion of Primary Health Care. Ask the same questions as you asked your MLA: Is there anything the Department could do in the short term as a show of good faith and concern for these women who don't have access to midwifery care-for example, allow women to go to another DHA for midwifery services or provide funds to cover liability insurance for private practice midwives who want to practice in non-model site areas?

And in the long term, what can the government do to support the DHAs financially to enable-and encourage-them to introduce midwifery?

You'll find information about Nova Scotia's Primary Health Care Plans and midwifery implementation at:

www.gov.ns.ca/health/primaryhealthcare

You can contact **Minister of Health Karen Casey** at:

Department of Health
4th Floor, Joseph Howe Building
1690 Hollis Street
PO Box 488
Halifax, NS
B3J 2R8
Phone: (902) 424-3377
Fax: (902) 424-0559
E-mail: caseykl@gov.ns.ca

Contact your District Health Authority (DHA) and your Local Community Health Board (CHB)

It's basically up to each individual DHA to determine if, when and how they will integrate midwives into their primary maternity care service. DHAs have many competing needs and limited budgets. They will have no particular reason to make midwifery services a priority unless you let them know that it's important.

In the Districts where the model sites are located, expanding midwifery services beyond the initial locations also needs to be made a priority.

Midwifery is a Primary Health Care service, so in addition to contacting the DHA Board, you could talk to the Director of Primary Care. In Capital District, the IWK Health Centre is introducing midwifery. At the IWK, you can contact

Ann McCabe, Director of the Childbirth and Women's Health Care Team
ann.mccabe@iwk.nshealth.ca

Anne Cogden, Executive Director of Primary Health
anne.cogden@iwk.nshealth.ca

Your elected Community Health Board makes recommendations to the District Health Authorities about the kinds of services that are needed in your community. Let your CHB know that midwifery services are important to you and your family. Let them know that midwifery care is important to your community, too.

You'll find information you can use to make your points under "What is Midwifery" on our website. "Ten Reasons Why We Need Midwifery in Nova Scotia" is very brief and to the point.

You'll find contact information for your local Community Health Board on your District Health Authority website. (DHA information on the back page)

Contact the Midwifery Regulatory Council (MRC)

The Midwifery Regulatory Council is the body that governs the profession of midwifery in Nova Scotia. Among its members are three public representatives who are there to represent the views and needs of women across the province.

Contact the MRC and ask what their plans are for encouraging the government to expand midwifery services and make midwifery a sustainable profession and a service that's available to all Nova Scotian families, not just the lucky few who live near a model site.

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