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University Health Board

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## **Guideline for midwives wishing to provide midwifery care to Friend or Relative**

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| Specialty:       | Maternity Services |
| Date Approved:   | January 2019       |
| Approved by:     | Antenatal Forum    |
| Date for Review: | January 2021       |

## 1. Introduction

As a professional, you may be asked to provide care to a close friend or family member and whilst there may be no legal or regulatory reason why you may not do so, you should consider carefully the risks or benefits before entering into such an agreement.

All registered midwives must declare that they have an indemnity arrangement appropriate for their role and the risks associated with their practice. If employed, you should seek advice and support from your employer, particularly in relation to vicarious liability.

If you provide care to a close friend or family member whilst employed, it is important you follow local policy, refer appropriately, document care given and seek additional clinical and supervisory support when required.

If acting in an independent capacity, you must hold your own professional indemnity insurance. The indemnity arrangement must provide adequate cover for any practice you undertake as a midwife in the United Kingdom. (NMC, Regulation in Practice, 2017). You remain accountable for any care given or omitted and must continue to practise within NMC The Code: Professional standards for practice and behaviour for nurses and midwives, 2015.

## 2. Providing care to a close relative, friend or colleague

**ABMU HB has made the decision not to support midwives in providing care to a close relative, friend or colleague unless this is in line with his/her normal professional midwifery duties.**

ABMU HB have decided on this policy for the following reasons:

- There is the potential for increased stress and emotional involvement that could possibly influence objective decision-making for any midwife who care for a close relative, friend or colleague during pregnancy, childbirth or in the post natal episode,
- There is also potential for conflict that could occur in such situations and therefore a need for additional support and guidance to a midwife.
- Whilst there are no legal or regulatory reasons to prevent midwives from providing such care, however such a request could cause additional anxiety to the midwife.

In the unlikely event that a midwife is asked to provide care to a close relative, friend or colleague during their shift, he/she must advise the Labour Ward Co-ordinator or Ward Manager of the personal connection.

### **3. Acting in a supportive capacity to a friend or relative**

There may be occasions where midwives wish to attend the birth of a family member or friend.

In these instances, midwives must ensure that, under no circumstances, do they become involved in the provision of any clinical care. Any requirement for additional support must be escalated to the clinical team on duty in the area at the time.

### **4. Supporting Documents**

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

NMC (2015) - The Code: Professional standards for practice and behaviour for nurses and midwives.

NMC (2017) - Practising as a midwife in the UK.

The RCM (2017) - RCM Guidance: Facilitating women's choice of midwife: Practical approaches to managing with flexibility.

The RCM. Medical malpractice insurance. The Royal College of Midwives London.

## Directorate of Women & Child Health

### Checklist for Clinical Guidelines being Submitted for Approval by Quality & Safety Group

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|--|---|
| Title of Guideline:  | Guideline for Midwives wishing to provide care to Friend or Relative                        |
| Name(s) of Author:   | Karen Evans   |
| Chair of Group or Committee supporting submission:                         | Antenatal Forum   |
| Issue / Version No:  | 2   |
| Next Review / Guideline Expiry:  | 2021  |
| Details of persons included in consultation process:                       | Midwifery Management Team   |
| Brief outline giving reasons for document being submitted for ratification | Update of existing policy   |
| Name of Pharmacist (mandatory if drugs involved):                          | n/a   |
| Please list any policies/guidelines this document will supercede:          | Guideline for midwives wishing to provide midwifery care to Friend or Relative (March 2015) |
| Keywords linked to document:   | Friend, relative, support, family   |
| File Name: Used to locate where file is stores on hard drive               |   |