



# Informed Choice Outside of Midwifery Standards

## **Informed Choice**

Informed decision-making and recognizing the right of the woman as an active participant and primary decision maker in her care, is an integral part of the midwifery model of care.

We support a shared responsibility model where midwives and women work together to reach decisions based on sharing information and understanding values in a respectful environment. Midwifery practice is informed by research, evidence-based guidelines, clinical experience, community standards and the values and needs of those in our care. It is our job to provide you with current research information, as well as our gained clinical experience, about important decisions you will make throughout the course of your pregnancy so that you can make a decision that is right for you and your family.

At Oceangrove Midwifery Care, this is one of the reasons why we have longer appointment visits than the average health care provider. We book 30-45 minute long visits so we have the opportunity to get into more detailed discussions and can learn

more about you and your family while providing care for you & your baby's health and wellbeing.

The decisions you will make throughout your maternity care include choices around screening tests, conventional procedures, and birth setting. Our job is to inform you of the larger medical community standards of care are (for example, evidence based guidelines by the Society of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists of Canada), what local community standards including local hospital policies are, as well what our midwifery scope of care is (as defined by the College of Midwives of BC). We offer you the resources and discussions to help you make the decisions that are right for you in your pregnancy, birth and postpartum. We do recognize that everyone's situation, values and beliefs are different and not everyone will make the same decisions given the same information.

### **When These Choices Go Outside of Midwifery & Community Standards**

Informed choice requires shared responsibility between clients and midwives and for midwives to be clear about their limitations and scope of practice. Midwives recognize that there will be situations in which clients will make decisions that go against the midwives professional recommendations and fall outside of midwifery standards of care and/or evidence-based care, community standards and guidelines.

While these situations can be difficult for both parties involved, we respect the autonomy of the women in our care and her rights as the primary decision maker in her pregnancy. We encourage our clients to actively seek information and ask questions throughout the decision making process. With the support and input from our professional associations and regulatory bodies, we would seek to provide clear, non-judgmental, evidence based information, consider and present alternative approaches and allow the woman and her family to

balance the risks and benefits of their decisions in accordance to their values and wishes. We may also offer consultations with our obstetrical and paediatric specialists where appropriate.

In extreme cases, where midwives and clients are unable to find a suitable decision for both parties, we may terminate midwifery care.

Further reading:

**POLICY FOR CLIENT REQUESTS OUTSIDE  
MIDWIFERY STANDARDS OF PRACTICE**

<https://www.cmbc.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Policy-for-Client-Requests-Outside-Midwifery-Standards-of-Practice.pdf>