Maternity - National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral

Summary  The purpose of this Policy Directive is to ensure that all midwives providing antenatal care utilise the Australian College of Midwives (ACM) National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral. The ACM Guidelines describe the parameters for identifying low risk pregnancy and support midwives to make appropriate consultation and referral to other clinicians and allied health staff if risk factors arise in pregnancy.

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Distributed to Public Health System, Divisions of General Practice, Health Associations Unions, NSW Ambulance Service, Ministry of Health, Tertiary Education Institutes
Audience Maternity services; midwives; doctors

Secretary, NSW Health
This Policy Directive may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Compliance with this directive is mandatory for NSW Health and is a condition of subsidy for public health organisations.
MATERNITY - MIDWIFERY GUIDELINES FOR CONSULTATION AND REFERRAL

PURPOSE

This is a policy for maternity services with respect to appropriate consultation and referral by midwives.

This policy establishes the requirement that all midwives providing maternity care utilise the Australian College of Midwives (ACM) National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral. The ACM Guidelines describes the parameters for identifying normal risk pregnancy and supports midwives to make appropriate consultation and referral to other clinicians and allied health staff if risk factors arise in pregnancy.

It is recognised that safe maternity care is reliant on robust systems and processes. This includes careful risk assessment with pathways for escalation to an appropriately role delineated service.

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

The NSW Department of Health and the Maternal and Perinatal Health Priority Taskforce have endorsed the Australian College of Midwives (ACM) National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral for use by all midwives in the provision of maternity care.

Area Health Services:

- Must ensure that all midwives who are providing maternity care refer to and use the Australian College of Midwives (ACM) National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral.
- Must ensure the availability of the ACM National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral to all midwives within their maternity services.
- Should provide ongoing education on the use of the ACM National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral.
- Should include an audit of the usage of the ACM National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral in their quality framework.

Maternity services must be aware of their designated higher level maternity service for consultation and/or referral and transfer. Equally, higher designated maternity services must be aware of their obligations and responsibilities for lower level maternity services.

IMPLEMENTATION

Chief Executives or delegated officers are to ensure a written local protocol is in place within maternity services and is implemented as described in this policy.

Health professionals in all relevant health care settings must be familiar with and use the ACM National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral.
Maternity services must ensure that the *ACM National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral* are available to all midwives in all areas of maternity care within one month of the release date of this Policy Directive.

These areas include but are not limited to:
- Antenatal Clinics, both medical and midwifery
- Antenatal inpatient units
- Postnatal inpatient units
- Day Assessment Units
- Delivery Suites/Birthing Centres
- Community Midwifery Programs
- Midwifery Continuity of Care Programs

Area Health Services should develop a local implementation plan for education in the use of the *ACM National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral* within three months of the release date of this Policy Directive.

This Policy Directive should be fully implemented by Area Health Services within six months of the release date.

The ACM National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral are appropriate for use by other clinicians when providing maternity care.

**REVISION HISTORY**

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<td>Month Year (PD2010_022)</td>
<td>Deputy-Director General Strategic Development</td>
<td>New policy mandating use of the ACM National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral</td>
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