

Maternity- National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral

Summary The purpose of this Policy Directive is to ensure that all midwives providing midwifery care utilise the Australian College of Midwives (ACM) National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral. The ACM Guidelines provide an evidenced-based framework to support midwives in their clinical decision making across all practice areas and facilitate appropriate consultation and referral to peer midwives, medical and allied health staff during pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period.

Document type Policy Directive

Document number PD2020_008

Publication date 11 March 2020

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Replaces PD2010_022

Review date 11 March 2025

Policy manual Patient Matters Manual for Public Health Organisations

File number H20/6406

Status Active

Functional group Clinical/Patient Services - Governance and Service Delivery, Maternity

Applies to Ministry of Health, Local Health Districts, NSW Ambulance Service

Distributed to Ministry of Health, Public Health System, Divisions of General Practice, NSW Ambulance Service, Tertiary Education Institutes

Audience Maternity Services;Midwives and Nurses;Medical Staff;Allied Health Staff

MATERNITY- NATIONAL MIDWIFERY GUIDELINES FOR CONSULTATION AND REFERRAL

POLICY STATEMENT

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

This Policy establishes the requirement that all midwives providing midwifery care utilise the *Australian College of Midwives (ACM) National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral*¹. The ACM Guidelines provide an evidenced-based framework to support midwives in their clinical decision making across all practice areas and facilitate appropriate consultation and referral to peer midwives, medical and allied health staff during pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period.

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.

SUMMARY OF POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Local Health Districts:

- 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.
- Provide ongoing education on the use of the *ACM National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral*©.
- Are to 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.

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.

¹ Australian College of Midwives, National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral, 2014, 3rd Edition, Issue 2.

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.

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
- Privately Practicing Endorsed Midwives with access rights.

Instructions for accessing the *ACM National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral*© can be found at the Australian College of Midwives website.

Local Health Districts should have in place a local implementation plan for education in the use of the *ACM National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral*©

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

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Amendment notes
March-2020 (PD2020_008)	Deputy Secretary, People, Culture and Governance	The mandatory requirements outlined in this PD have been developed from PD2010_022. Minor revisions have been included in keeping with the current version of National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral 3 rd Ed., Issue 2 (2014).
(PD2010_022)	Deputy-Director General Strategic Development	New policy mandating use of the <i>ACM National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral</i>