

	MIDWIFERY SECOND BIRTH ATTENDANT POLICY
	Date Effective: 2022-06-10
	Revised: March 2024; December 2025; April 2026
	Next Review Due: December 2028

Background

The Midwifery Model of Care, Standards of Practice for Registered Midwives, and the Midwives Regulations require that a Registered Midwife (RM) and a second birth attendant, trained and certified in neonatal resuscitation and basic life support, attend each birth.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set the Prince Edward Island College of Nursing and Midwifery (PEICNM) requirements for RMs working with second birth attendants.

1.0 Policy

- 1.1 Regardless of location, every attempt will be made to have every midwifery birth attended by an RM and a second birth attendant.
- 1.2 The RM is the most responsible person for the care throughout the labour, delivery, and immediate postpartum period.
- 1.3 The RM must be available at all times when a second birth attendant is providing care.
- 1.4 The RM must ensure the second birth attendant is orientated to their role during out-of-hospital births. The RM must clearly identify the role of the second birth attendant in emergencies such as precipitous delivery, haemorrhage, newborn resuscitation, meconium-stained amniotic fluid, and shoulder dystocia.

1.5 The second birth attendant must be competent to assist the RM during labour, birth, and the immediate postpartum period, by having the following competencies:

1.4.1 Current certification in:

- 1.4.1.1 Neonatal resuscitation (NRP)
- 1.4.1.2 Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- 1.4.1.3 Obstetrical Emergency skills

1.4.2 Education, knowledge, and competence in the following:

- 1.4.2.1 Assessment of vital signs (blood pressure, pulse, temperature, respirations, fetal heart sounds and rate);
- 1.4.2.2 Postpartum assessment of uterine tone and position, blood loss and bladder;
- 1.4.2.3 Infection control and prevention standards;
- 1.4.2.4 Basic knowledge of labour and birth;
- 1.4.2.5 Basic knowledge of instruments, supplies, and drugs used by RMs;
- 1.4.2.6 Documentation; and,
- 1.4.2.7 Observation, assessment, and care of the newborn.

1.5 The RM may not delegate tasks to the second birth attendant who is not legally authorized to perform them.

1.6 In circumstances where an RM has safety concerns with respect to the second birth attendant, the RM may require an RM attend the out-of-hospital birth (OOH).

1.7 When the second birth attendant is a member of a regulated health profession, they remain responsible to their regulating body for the care they provide. It is the second birth attendant's responsibility to contact their regulatory body regarding any restrictions that may prevent them in providing second attendant support to a RM.

1.8 When the second birth attendant is a member of a regulated health profession, they must ensure that their liability protection will cover them while providing care as a second birth attendant.

1.9 The second birth attendant is to be present during the second stage of labour, the birth and the immediate postpartum period as required. The second birth attendant may be present during the first stage of labour at the RM's discretion.

1.10 During the second stage of labour, the second birth attendant will:

- 1.10.1 Provide assistance to the RM
- 1.10.2 Provide support to the client
- 1.10.3 Check layout of supplies to ensure accessibility of drugs, instruments, functioning of equipment
- 1.10.4 Auscultate and interpret fetal heart rate
- 1.10.5 Document in the health record

- 1.11 During birth the second attendant will:
 - 1.11.1 Provide assistance to the RM
 - 1.11.2 Ensure warmth and safety of the newborn
 - 1.11.3 Assess, report, and record the condition of the newborn
 - 1.11.4 Collaboratively determine and assess Apgar scores
 - 1.11.5 Administer medications as directed by the RM as per 1.5
 - 1.11.6 Document in the health record

- 1.12 During the postpartum period, the second birth attendant will:
 - 1.12.1 Provide assistance the RM
 - 1.12.2 Assist the RM during suturing, if required
 - 1.12.3 Provide support and assistance to the client
 - 1.12.4 Check blood pressure, pulse, fundus, lochia and bladder
 - 1.12.5 Document in the health record

- 1.13 During an emergency, the second birth attendant will:
 - 1.13.1 Phone emergency medical services (OOH)
 - 1.13.2 Phone the receiving hospital (OOH)
 - 1.13.3 Initiate an emergency response (in hospital)
 - 1.13.4 Assist the RM in setting up or establishing intravenous/drug therapy
 - 1.13.5 Check blood pressure and pulse
 - 1.13.6 Assist with CPR and neonatal resuscitation
 - 1.13.7 Assist in preparation for transport
 - 1.13.8 Administer medications as directed by the RM as per 1.5.