

Midwives and Abortion Care – Q&A

1. Is the AOM pro-choice?

Yes. Support choice in health care and a clients' right to choose is a central tenet of midwifery care.

The [AOM's Statement on Reproductive Choice](#) reflects our commitment to reproductive care as an integral part of health, including contraception, family planning and access to legal and safe abortion care.

Additionally, the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) recognizes abortion-related care as a [core midwifery competency](#).

2. Does the AOM support midwives providing abortion care?

Yes. [According to a report](#) the abortion system in Ontario is fragile. There are decreasing numbers of hospitals and providers offering abortion; and providers are often difficult to identify due to safety concerns or community sanctions. The lack of abortion services available outside urban areas poses further access barriers. Enabling midwives to provide abortion care could increase access to abortion care.

3. Does the AOM support the development of a midwifery model of abortion care?

Yes. Midwives are experts in reproductive health. Leveraging core tenets of midwifery care, including client-centred care and care that can be provided in the community, would benefit those seeking abortion care.

4. Is abortion care within midwifery scope of practice?

Many of the skills, knowledge and competencies required to provide abortion care are already within the ability and competencies of midwives. Midwives are currently unable to provide medical abortion services on their own authority as they do not have the authority to prescribe Mifegymiso at this time. The College of Midwives (CMO) is requesting prescribing rights to this drug in their upcoming submission to the ministry. It may be possible that surgical abortions fall under midwifery scope and the college is committed to clarifying this interpretation of the legislation in the near future. However, as midwives have not been previously been funded to provide abortion care in Ontario, the provision of abortion care can be understood as an expansion in role for midwives in Ontario.

5. Are there any regulatory barriers to midwives providing abortion care?

There are some regulatory barriers, but they are currently being addressed. For example, midwives cannot currently prescribe Mifegymiso (the abortion medication recently approved for medical abortions in the first trimester). The CMO has requested changes to increase the prescription authority of midwives. We are hopeful that this change will occur in the near future.

6. Can midwives get funded to provide abortion care?

Yes. Recent changes to the contract between government and the Association of Ontario Midwives have removed funding barriers and provided a mechanism for midwives to be funded for supplementary and alternative services such as abortion care. A call for proposals was issued by the Ministry of Health on November 7, 2017.

7. Are midwives required to provide abortion care services?

No. Midwives will be able to choose whether they wish to apply for funding to provide abortion care. For those who do not wish to provide abortion care, they can continue to do what all midwives are currently required to do, which is to refer clients to needed or requested services, including a termination of pregnancy.

8. Who do I contact if I have more questions?

You can contact [Mary-K Dunn](#), Policy Analyst.