



# Introduction to Midwives



## Midwives as Primary Care Providers

Midwifery has been a regulated health profession since the passing of the Midwifery Act (1991) which includes an exemption clause for Indigenous Midwives. Indigenous Midwives working within the exemption clause and Registered Midwives are both recognized as primary care providers and funded by the Ministry of Health to provide clinical care to clients.

## Indigenous Midwives working within the Exemption Clause

Indigenous Midwives working within the exemption clause provide clinical care rooted in cultural practices and are acknowledged and governed by their community. They may have received their clinical training from university-based midwifery education programs, or through community-based Indigenous midwifery apprenticeship programs. Their care includes clinical practices such as ordering ultrasounds, bloodwork and other diagnostic tests, as well as care rooted in traditional ways and teachings. Indigenous midwives working within the exemption clause are integrated members of healthcare teams and can make referrals to specialists such as obstetricians where required. Indigenous Midwifery Programs were designed and funded for Indigenous Midwives working within the exemption clause to bring midwifery back to First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities.

## Registered Midwives

Registered Midwives complete their midwifery education at university. Their training is focused on the development of clinical skills and does not officially include training in traditional Indigenous midwifery knowledge and practices. They are licensed and regulated by the College of Midwives of Ontario. Registered midwives can work in Indigenous Midwifery Programs (IMPs), Midwifery Practice Groups (MPGs), and Expanded Midwifery Care Model (EMCM). Some Registered Midwives are First Nations, Métis or Inuit.