

INTEGRATING MIDWIFERY INTO INTERPROFESSIONAL PRIMARY CARE TEAMS

Examples of well-integrated midwifery
services improving access to Primary Care in
Ontario



Association of
Ontario **Midwives**
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**Indigenous
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Ontario Midwifery by the Numbers

As of **May 2025**, there are:

- **1050** Registered Midwives in Ontario
- **18** Indigenous midwives practicing under the ***Midwifery Act* exception clause**

Midwives work across a variety of settings, including:

- **89** Midwifery Practice Groups
- **33** Expanded Midwifery Care Models (located in hospitals, CHCs, FHTs, and other not-for-profits)
- **14** Indigenous Midwifery Programs serving First Nation communities
- **3** birth centres (Tsi Nón:we Ionnakerátstha / Six Nations Birth Centre, Toronto Birth Centre, Ottawa Birth and Wellness Centre)

After 30 years of regulated, funded midwifery in Ontario, there are significant barriers to the full integration of midwifery into the health system.

Midwives in Interprofessional Primary Care Teams

As primary care providers, midwives are already working in interprofessional teams across the province funded through the **Ministry of Health and Ontario Health**.

Drivers for success in **well-integrated IPCTs with midwives** include:

- Integration of midwives at **an early phase** of the development of the program and team
- Midwives working to their **full scope** as **primary care providers**
- Removal of **unnecessary barriers/restrictions** to midwifery work
- **Adequate remuneration** of midwifery work and services
- Midwives' involvement in **decision-making**

EXAMPLES OF MIDWIFERY INTEGRATION IN INTERPROFESSIONAL TEAMS



MATCH (South Riverdale CHC)

The MATCH (Midwifery and Toronto Community Health) Program operates within the Interprofessional Primary Care Team at **South Riverdale Community Health Centre**

- Interprofessional team consists of **six midwives** and **one social worker** offering wide variety of services related to well-gynecological and pregnancy care
- **Website:** [MATCH Program – SRCHC](#)
- **Services:**
 - Pregnancy, labour and birth, and postpartum care for infants and adults
 - Abortion and miscarriage care
 - Access for underserved communities (uninsured, un/under-housed, 2SLGBTQI+)

The Midwives' Clinic East York/Don Mills

The Midwives' Clinic East York/Don Mills operating within Thorncliffe Park Community Hub

- **Co-located** with other primary care providers and health services, including Health Access Thorncliffe Park, other primary care services and psychiatry
 - Model of integrated care and referral between midwives and other practitioners co-located within the Hub
- Partnership with Women's Health in Women's Hands CHC increasing access to perinatal care for underserved families
- **Website:** <https://www.themidwivesclinic.ca/>
- **Services:**
 - Prenatal, pregnancy, labour and birth and postpartum care for infants and adults

NorWest CHC Midwives

Midwives at **NorWest Community Health Centres** service the CHC located in **Thunder Bay**, and serve Ontarians who live in catchment areas of CHC's satellite clinics in **Armstrong** (252 km distance) and **Longlac** (305 km)

- **Website:** <https://norwestchc.org/programs-services/midwifery-program/>
- Services address current gaps in perinatal care impacting marginalized and vulnerable populations in Northwestern Ontario
- **Services:**
 - Prenatal and postnatal care, sexual and reproductive health services
 - STI testing and treatment, contraception (IUD and implants)
 - Menstrual health, unplanned pregnancy care
 - Cervical screening, lactation consultant services
 - Well baby care up to 18 months, education for clients and families
 - Gender affirming care for clients

Crown Point Family Health Team Midwives

Team of **four midwives (2 FTE)** at **Crown Point Family Health Team** working within an Interdisciplinary Primary Care Team of family doctors, dietician, obstetricians, pharmacists, and local ultrasound services.

- **Website:** <https://www.crownpointfhc.ca/midwives-new>
- Midwives work part time at the FHT as well as community-based midwife-led clinics
- **Services provided:**
 - Referrals accepted from outside FHT
 - Reproductive and sexual health services ranging from birth to menopause, perinatal mental health services, well-baby care, lactation consultant support, group sessions for prenatal nutrition, IUD clinic
- IUD clinic has had great successes, including dramatically **reducing wait times for IUD contraception**

Mamaway Wiidokdaadwin

Mamaway Wiidokdaadwin is managed through the **Barrie Area Native Advisory Circle** and serves residents of **North Simcoe and Muskoka**.

- **Interprofessional Primary Health Care team** including **one Indigenous midwife** working alongside a family physician, nurse practitioners, and RNs
- **Website:** <https://mamaway.ca/>
- **Services:**
 - Prenatal care referred to midwife after 20 weeks, as well as intrapartum and immediate postpartum care
 - Integrated with NP care
 - Services are grounded in cultural practices and tailored according to community needs

Norfolk Prenatal and Newborn Health Program (NPNHP)

Registered Midwife-led interdisciplinary clinic within the **Norfolk Family Health Team**, including midwives, a lactation consultant, social workers and dietitians

- **Website:** <https://norfolkfht.ca/community-programs/#>
- Providing key healthcare services in rural area in Norfolk County
- **Services:**
 - Prenatal care, well-woman and reproductive care, postpartum care, newborn/well-baby care and breastfeeding support, group education

WellFort Community Health Services

Interprofessional team including **one midwife** within **WellFort Community Health Services**.

- **Website:** <https://www.wellfort.ca/home/programs-services/healthcare-services/midwifery-and-prenatal>
- Increases health care accessibility for marginalized individuals, especially those without health insurance.
- Provides care to ethnic and linguistic minority populations, including those living with poverty within the City of Brampton
- **Services:**
 - Prenatal and postpartum midwifery care, contraceptive counselling, IUD insertion, well person care, lactation support

Midwifery aligns with Ontario's Quintuple Aims

INVESTING IN MIDWIFERY

In alignment
with the
**QUINTUPLE
AIM**

1

BETTER CLIENT EXPERIENCES

Midwifery care enhances client satisfaction and clinical outcomes by centering clients through informed choice, addressing diverse needs and fostering trusting relationships.

2

IMPROVE POPULATION HEALTH

Midwives deliver excellent perinatal and newborn health outcomes, engage in community-based health promotion and improve access to care for underserved populations.

3

REDUCE HEALTHCARE COSTS

Midwives reduce strain on health system resources by offering lower-intervention options, 24/7 availability, and community care. Midwives reduce reliance on specialists and hospital-based care, including costly and unnecessary emergency department visits.

4

INCREASE MIDWIVES' WELL-BEING

Midwives urgently need access to equitable compensation and benefits, flexible work options, expanded roles, and opportunities for recognition and leadership. These are key integration strategies to improve job satisfaction and reduce the current crisis of burnout and attrition.

5

ADVANCE HEALTH EQUITY

Midwifery provides culturally safe, accessible care to residents of Ontario, including care to underserved, uninsured and other equity-deserving communities. Indigenous, including First Nations, Inuit, and Metis midwives support the reduction of health disparities in home communities while affirming sovereignty and ancestral knowledge.

Midwifery is responsive to clients' needs, adaptable to community context, and supports the Primary Care Action Plan (PCAP) priorities of right care in the right time, in the right place.

Investment in and improved integration of midwifery support PCAP goals of:

- connecting every Ontarian to a primary care team/provider
- making primary care more connected and convenient, and
- supporting primary care providers

A primary care system that **is comprehensive, convenient and connected** for Ontarians requires the integration of midwives and their clients.

Barriers to midwifery integration in PCAP

- **Demand vs. supply:** Ontarians seeking midwifery care far outnumber number of midwives, leaving families without care
- **Recruitment and retention:** Lack of Health Human Resource plan for midwives working in various models; limited education seats following closure of Midwifery Education Program Laurentian site
- **System integration:** fragmented integration of midwifery care in broader health system, including regulatory barriers and restrictive funding models
- **Career pathways:** midwives need more flexible work options
- **Scope of practice:** midwives can play an even more vital role in sexual, reproductive and infant health with expanded scope.

Strategic questions and next steps

What are **opportunities for midwifery integration within existing Ontario Health structures** and **representation at primary care decision-making tables**?

How can midwives best access opportunities to be included in the next round of **IPCT application/proposals and funding**?

How can existing midwife-led clinics (e.g. practice groups, birth centres) be leveraged as hubs for **IPCT expansion**?

How will midwives be included in **health human resource and system planning**, including support for **clinical education** in the Midwifery Education Program for planned primary care expansion?

THANK YOU

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