



AOM Statement: Shortage of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in Ontario

April 3, 2020

Across Ontario, close to 1,000 midwives are on the health-care frontlines providing care to 25,000 pregnant people and their newborns and families across the province. All health-care workers must have access to PPE, including midwives.

Midwives are primary health-care providers who provide pregnancy, birth and postpartum care in community clinics, in birth centres, in the homes of patients/clients and in all of Ontario's hospital-based birth units.

It is a priority at this time to both **keep healthy patients out of hospital** who have chosen to receive care in the community with their midwife and to protect the well-being of health-care workers on the frontlines. Midwives contribute to efforts to keep care out of hospital by providing primary care and birth management in the community, where appropriate. Midwives require PPE (masks, gowns, gloves and eye protection) to provide care, whether in the community or in hospital.

Already, **25% of midwifery clinics across the province are running out or have a critical shortage of essential PPE**. This means that already, *for no reason other than a PPE shortage* in their practice, midwives are redirecting care to hospitals in order for the midwife to access PPE. In fact, midwives are now reporting there is no assurance PPE will be provided in hospital either. This is extremely concerning and requires immediate action.

We appreciate the efforts being taken by both the federal and provincial governments to respond to the pandemic, and we urge government to please take immediate action to ensure access to PPE for midwives, regardless of whether they are providing care in the community or in hospitals.

Urgent and immediate action is needed to keep health-care workers, who are working tirelessly to provide care to Ontarians, safe.

Elizabeth Brandeis, RM
President

Kelly Stadelbauer, RN, BScN, MBA
Executive Director