

FRAMEWORK FOR MIDWIFE CERTIFICATION FOR INTRAUTERINE CONTRACEPTION¹

Entry-level midwives in British Columbia provide primary care on their own responsibility throughout the perinatal period, including the provision of contraceptive services during the 3 months following a birth. The CMBC's *Competencies for Registered Midwives* states that entry-level midwives must have knowledge of methods of birth control and family planning and the ability to counsel in the choice and use of contraceptive methods.

Under Schedule B to the *Midwives Regulation*, midwives with specialized training in prescriptive contraceptive therapeutics who are certified by the College of Midwives of BC (CMBC) may prescribe hormonal and intrauterine contraceptives. Specialized practice certification in inserting intrauterine contraception (IUC) may be obtained through a course or program established or approved under the authority set out in the Bylaws for the College of Midwives of BC that meets the requirements set out in this framework.

CMBC Certification for prescribing hormonal contraception is a prerequisite to undertaking the certification process for intrauterine contraception and obtaining specialized practice certification in inserting intrauterine devices.

Limitations – A midwife with specialized practice certification in this competency area may only prescribe or insert IUCs in the three months following childbirth.

Certification

The certification process must be carried out by a recognized midwifery, medical, registered nurse or nurse-practitioner education program approved by the CMBC. The clinical experience portion must take place under the supervision of an experienced health care practitioner with contraceptive prescribing authority approved by either the CMBC or the educational institution offering the program.

Upon successful completion of the certification process, proof of completion must be submitted to the College of Midwives of BC before certification is granted. Where competence in this area of specialized practice has been acquired in a jurisdiction outside of British Columbia the registrant must present proof of certification and competence to the College of Midwives for assessment of equivalency in meeting CMBC requirements.

Specialized Practice Certification must include:

Demonstration of theoretical and practical knowledge of prescribing contraceptives including:

- 1) the knowledge necessary for the safe assessment, insertion, and management of IUCs as set out in the CMBC's *Standards, Limits and Conditions for Prescribing, Ordering and Administering Drugs*;
- 2) knowledge of indications and contraindications, the mechanisms of action and potential side effects of IUCs;

¹ PLEASE NOTE: Delegation of this act with approved specialized practice certification has been approved until the Midwives Regulation is amended to include Intrauterine Contraceptive Therapy as a Certification for Specialized Practice. For more information, contact CMBC.

- 3) the ability to carry out a comprehensive sexual health assessment that includes cultural considerations, including a focus on the socio-economic determinants of health;
- 4) the ability to determine and prescribe the appropriate IUC for an individual client;
- 5) the ability to provide the client with proper information and instruction for use and appropriate cautions regarding risks, side effects and when to see a health care provider for follow-up;
- 6) the ability to recognize symptoms and signs of endometritis, expulsion and normal adjustment reaction to a new IUC such as bleeding and cramping and signs and symptoms requiring consultation with or referral to a medical practitioner.

Demonstration of appropriate skills in inserting IUCs.

A midwife's knowledge and skills will be verified by completion of study materials and at least one session in clinical placement where she will place at least 4 IUCs under supervision.

Recertification

Evidence-based continuing education programs are a necessary component for updating practitioners' knowledge and skills (Taylor, D., Levi, A. and Simmonds, K. 2010). Certified prescribers are expected to keep up to date with the latest evidence relevant to IUCs. If a midwife has not been actively inserting IUCs over the preceding 24 months (less than 4 insertions), completion of an approved continuing education module and/or supervised insertions will be required for recertification. Registrants must keep a log of the number of IUCs they have inserted and must submit the log to the College at time of annual registration renewal for specialized certification eligibility.

Abbreviations

IUD = intrauterine device, and is used to refer to the copper IUDs available in Canada

IUS = hormonal intrauterine system

IUC = intrauterine contraception, and is used to indicate both IUDs and IUSs

LARC = long-acting reversible contraception, and in Canada refers to IUCs since these are the only LARCs available in Canada. Note that this definition of LARC does not include depot medroxyprogesterone acetate (DMPA).

References

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