

FRAMEWORK FOR MIDWIFE CERTIFICATION FOR HORMONAL CONTRACEPTIVE THERAPY¹

Entry-level midwives in British Columbia provide primary care on their own responsibility to clients throughout the perinatal period, including the provision of contraceptive services for clients 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 clients and their family 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 contraception for clients for the prevention of conception. Specialized practice certification in this competency area 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.

Limitations – A midwife with specialized practice certification in this competency area may only prescribe contraceptive agents to a client 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. Currently CMBC recognizes British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) course NSPN 7720 – Contraceptive Management in Reproductive Health.

The midwife must submit proof of course completion 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.

The provision of appropriate contraceptive services requires adequate training of care providers including the use of decision-making tools in the areas of contraception and sexual health².

¹ An approved certification program is in place. For more information, please contact CMBC.

² SOGC (2004) Canadian Contraception Consensus. Systemic contraceptives should be available to clients seeking a reliable, reversible, method of contraception.

Specialized Practice Certification must include:

Demonstration of theoretical and practical knowledge of prescribing contraceptives including:

- 1) the knowledge necessary for the safe assessment, provision, and management of systemic contraceptives, combined hormonal contraceptives, and progestin only contraceptives as set out in the CMBC's *Standards, Limits and Conditions for Prescribing, Ordering and Administering Drugs*;
- 2) knowledge of indications and contraindications, the pharmacological mechanisms of action and potential side effects for oral contraceptives; transdermal contraceptives, injectable contraceptives; intravaginal contraceptives;
- 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 prescription for use by 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; and
- 6) the ability to recognize a contraceptive medication's adverse effects, including knowledge of when medication may need to be discontinued or substituted and signs and symptoms requiring consultation with or referral to a medical practitioner.

Demonstration of Appropriate Skills in Prescribing Hormonal Contraceptives

A midwife's knowledge and skills will be verified by completion of study materials and the successful passing of written and/or oral and simulated practical assessments.

Continuing Education

Evidence-based continuing education programs are a necessary component for updating practitioners' knowledge and skills³. Certified prescribers are expected to keep up to date with the latest evidence relevant to prescribing hormonal contraceptives.

³ Taylor D, Levi A, Simmonds K. Reframing unintended pregnancy prevention: a public health model. *Contraception*. 2010;82:363–366

References

Jordan, B., Espey, E. and Godfrey, E.M., 2010, Improving patient care and reducing unintended pregnancy: translating new guidelines into effective practice. *Contraception*. Vol. 82, no. 1, p. 1-2. DOI 10.1016/j.contraception.2010.04.001.

World Health Organization & Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, 2005, *Decision-making tool for family planning clients and providers* [online]. Sexual and Reproductive Health. Available from: http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/family_planning/9241593229/en/