

FRAMEWORK FOR MIDWIFE CERTIFICATION IN SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS MANAGEMENT

Midwives in British Columbia provide primary care on their own responsibility to clients throughout the perinatal period, including the three months following birth. The College of Midwives of BC (CMBC)'s *Competencies for Registered Midwives* states that all midwives must have knowledge of sexually transmitted infections, vaginal infections, and the ability to obtain the necessary specimens to determine the presence of such infections.

Under Schedule B to the *Midwives Regulation*, midwives with specialized training and CMBC certification in sexually transmitted infections management may prescribe, order and administer drugs and substances for the treatment of sexually transmitted infections. 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, order and administer drugs and substances in accordance with *Standards, Limits and Conditions for Prescribing, Ordering and Administering Drugs* for the treatment of sexually transmitted infections throughout the perinatal period, including the three months following birth.

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 7735 – Sexually Transmitted Infections Management. The midwife must submit proof of course completion to CMBC 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 submit an *Application for Specialized Practice Certification Equivalency Assessment* to CMBC for assessment of equivalency in meeting the requirements outlined in this framework. Should a registrant wish to apply for equivalency assessment, they may request the application from CMBC. Specialized practice certification must be received by the midwife prior to independent practice in this competency area.

The provision of appropriate sexually transmitted infections management requires adequate training of care providers including the use of risk assessment tools in the areas of sexual health.¹

¹ Public Health Agency of Canada. *Canadian guidelines for sexually transmitted infections*. Online Government Publication

Training for Specialized Practice Certification Must Include:

Demonstration of theoretical and practical knowledge of sexually transmitted infections and their treatment, including:

- 1) the ability to diagnose and treat various sexually transmitted infections as set out in the CMBC's *Standards, Limits and Conditions for Prescribing, Ordering and Administering Drugs and Canadian Guidelines for Sexually Transmitted Infections*;
- 2) the ability to recognize the indications and contraindications, the pharmacological mechanisms of action and the potential side effects of medications used to treat sexually transmitted infections;
- 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 integrate history or present illness and review of system into the sexual history when appropriate;
- 5) the ability to utilize appropriate risk assessment tools and diagnostic screening tests;
- 6) the ability to determine and prescribe the appropriate medication for each individual client as indicated;
- 7) 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
- 8) the ability to recognize the adverse effects of a medication, 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 Treating Sexually Transmitted Infections

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 skills. Certified prescribers are expected to keep up to date with the latest evidence relevant treatment of sexually transmitted infections.