

Standard:	Postpartum/Newborn Visits
Approved by:	Council
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Attachments:	



POSTPARTUM/NEWBORN VISITS

Purpose

The purpose of this Standard is to describe the requirements for midwives regarding scheduling and attending postpartum/newborn visits.

Midwifery standards of practice refer to the minimum standard of professional behaviour and clinical practice expected of midwives in Ontario.

Definition

Postpartum/newborn visits include thorough assessments of the health and wellbeing of the mother and newborn and appropriate management of care.

Background

The Ontario midwifery model of care includes routine postpartum/newborn visits up to six weeks following birth. Postpartum/newborn visits occurring within the first week following birth routinely take place in the client's home (or other location of her choice). When clients remain in hospital, routine postpartum/newborn visits are conducted by the midwife in hospital until the client is discharged home. Postpartum/newborn visits occurring after the first week are routinely held at the midwifery clinic, in the event that the client is able to attend there.

Standard

Midwives are expected to use their best clinical judgment regarding the most appropriate day/time to conduct postpartum/newborn visits in order to ensure client and newborn safety. Notwithstanding this, the following schedule of postpartum/newborn visits is strongly recommended by the CMO. Any deviation by a midwife from this schedule must be communicated to the client and documented in the client health record with a rationale for the deviation.

- Within 24 hours of birth
- One visit between days two (2) and three (3)
- One visit between days four (4) and six (6)
- One visit between days seven (7) and fourteen (14)
- One visit between weeks three (3) and four (4)
- One visit at approximately six (6) weeks (discharge visit)

If clinically indicated, postpartum/newborn visits in addition to those listed above shall be conducted.

Following a Transfer of Care

Continued supportive midwifery care for the client or newborn must be arranged if the primary care of one or both is transferred to a physician. In the event that the primary care of only one of the pair is transferred, the midwife remains the most responsible provider for the other and will follow the routine schedule of visits.

In the event that a client and newborn are returning to midwifery care in the six-week postpartum period, following a transfer of primary care, the attending midwife must conduct a clinically appropriate physical assessment of both the client and newborn at the first available opportunity.

RESCINDED