
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2014HLTH0136-001892
December 16, 2014

Ministry of Health
Midwives Association of BC

Government delivers agreement with midwives

VICTORIA – Government has reached an agreement with B.C.’s registered midwives that will benefit mothers and their babies by improving access to midwifery services throughout the province.

“Through this agreement, we will continue our work with midwives to support this growing profession and strengthen maternity care in B.C.,” said Health Minister Terry Lake. “B.C. is a leader in Canada for its support of midwifery, and this agreement builds on our investments to help ensure a healthy start for children and families.”

The five-year agreement extends from April 1, 2014, through to March 31, 2019. It emphasizes the development and enhancement of programs which improve access to maternity care options for mothers and their families. This includes rural practice and rural locum programs to encourage and support midwives who practice, or wish to practice in these communities.

The ministry values the important work midwives do and the options of care they provide expecting parents. To continue to advance the midwifery profession, the agreement provides for the integration of midwives into primary maternity care planning committees and the development of jointly run committees with government and midwife representation.

The total increase to the value of the agreement is 5.5% over its term. It includes a modest compensation increase along with \$1.6 million in investments that will grow and sustain the profession, and improve access to midwifery care throughout the province. In addition, a \$200,000 allocation has been established to expand services that midwives will deliver over the term of the agreement. Discussion on what these expanded services will be are still in preliminary stages, but may include collaborative care in rural communities, and other suggestions from midwives, the ministry and other partners in the health care system.

“This agreement is good news for the midwifery profession and good news for B.C.’s women and families,” said Ganga Jolicoeur, executive director, Midwives Association of BC. “It will provide the supports required to grow and sustain our profession, enhance midwifery services and increase access to maternity care, especially in rural communities.”

Quick facts:

- There are 260 registered midwives in B.C., of which approximately 200 midwives are practising.
- In 2013-14, registered midwives played a role in nearly 8,600 births or about 18% of the

total number of births in B.C.

- In 2013-14, midwives assisted about 35 births each on average.
- Registered midwives are highly trained, educated and regulated professionals who are experts in low-risk pregnancy, birth and postnatal care.
- Registered midwives practice in clinics, hospitals and homes and provide 24-hour service. Their services are fully covered by the Medical Services Plan.
- Midwives are licensed to manage normal pregnancies, deliveries and postpartum care.
- Midwives are registered with and regulated by the College of Midwives of British Columbia (CMBC) according to the BC Health Professions Act.
- The UBC midwifery degree program is a four-year undergraduate degree program established in 2002. It was expanded in 2012 to double the number of seats in the program from 10 to 20.

Learn More:

To learn more about midwifery in British Columbia, visit: <http://www.bcmidwives.com/>

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