

PHILOSOPHY OF MIDWIFERY PRACTICE

The midwives practice model is based on the following guiding principles:

- **Confidence in the competence and autonomy of women;**
- **Respect and trust in the physiological process of pregnancy and childbirth;**
- **The importance of continuity of care and of relationship;**
- **The personal and egalitarian relationship with the woman.**

More specifically, the Philosophy of midwifery, adopted by the RSFQ in 1997, is defined as follows:

“The practice of midwifery is based on the respect of pregnancy and birth as normal physiological processes having an important significance in a woman’s life. Midwives acknowledge that delivery and birth are moments that belong to the women and their families. The responsibility of healthcare professionals is to offer women the respect and support they need to give birth with their own capacities, safely and with dignity. Midwives respect the diversity of women’s needs as well as the numerous personal and cultural significations that the women, their family and their community associate with pregnancy, birth and the experience of being a new parent.

Midwifery is to be practised within the context of a personal and egalitarian relationship, open to social, cultural and emotional needs, as well as the physical needs of women. This relationship is established with continuity of care and services during pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period.

Midwives encourage women to make choices regarding the care and services they receive and the way they are given. They view decisions as the result of a process in which the responsibilities are shared between the woman, her family (as defined by the woman) and health professionals.

Midwives acknowledge that the final decision belongs to the woman. They respect women’s right to choose their health professional and where they want to give birth, in accordance with OSFQ standards of practice. Midwives are willing to assist women in the birthplace of their choice, including their home.

Midwives consider that promoting health is essential in the pregnancy cycle. Their practice is based on prevention and includes wise use of technology. Midwives consider that the mother and the child’s interests are close and compatible. They believe that the best way to ensure the mother and baby’s well-being is to focus their care on the mother.

Midwives encourage the support of families and the community as a privileged way to facilitate the adaptation of new families.”