

Position Statement

Midwifery Regulation and Collaboration with Women

Background

Women and other gender diverse people want policy and political change in how maternity care is organised (1). It is appropriate that users of midwife services who are reliant on the quality of their caregivers be included in the organisation that develops and oversees any midwifery regulation. By including service users in policymaking, regulatory bodies can ensure that policies truly protect the interests of those the regulatory authority is established to protect. Such inclusion fosters a more collaborative and responsive regulatory environment that better addresses the needs of those using midwife services and the broader societal context.

ICM has several documents including international standards, guidelines and position statements that explicitly support women's rights and inclusion in the decision-making processes in the regulatory processes that ensure public protection and quality midwifery care.

Including service users (women and gender diverse people) in the regulation of midwives enhances their abilities to:

- Influence and track the design and delivery of midwifery services of which they are the primary users,
- Educate, empower, and engage other women and their families on their right to health and quality midwifery services,
- Build grass-roots initiatives within communities to track progress and hold governments, development partners and other stakeholders accountable for providing high quality maternal and newborn health care.

Position

ICM recognises the importance of inclusion of service users on the governing body that oversees and manages midwifery regulation in any country.

ICM recommends that these representatives be identified from within the women's organisations concerned to advance the quality of care in their country.

ICM urges governments and those engaged in the revision or drafting of midwifery regulation, to consult with a broad range of women's and interest groups as to the content of such regulation and its application within their countries.

Recommendations

Member associations are urged to:

- Work with the bodies that regulate midwifery in their country and advocate for consultation with service users in developing, reviewing and implementing regulation,
- Work with service users to achieve this goal.

Sources

(1) White Ribbon Alliance (2021) Behind the Demands. Report available from <https://whiteribbonalliance.org/resources/behind-the-demands/>

Related ICM Documents

- ICM. 2024. International Standards for Midwifery Regulation.
- ICM. 2024. Position Statement. Partnership between Women and Midwives.
- ICM. 2023. Position Statement. Legislation to Govern Midwifery Practice.
- ICM. 2014. Core Document. International Code of Ethics for Midwives.
- ICM. 2024. Regulation toolkit.

Adopted at Manila International Council meeting, 1999

Reviewed and adopted at Toronto International Council meeting, 2017

Reviewed and adopted at the Virtual Council Meeting 2024

Date for next review 2027