CONTINUITY OF MIDWIFERY CARE PROGRAM

Are you expecting a baby?

and

Are you interested in sharing your journey through pregnancy, birth and early parenting with a midwife student?
ARE YOU EXPECTING A BABY?

Would you like to share your experience of pregnancy, birth and the early days of parenthood with a midwifery student?

WHO IS A MIDWIFE?

A midwife is someone who is qualified to provide care to a woman during her pregnancy, birth and following the birth of her baby. Midwifery is a woman centred discipline founded on the belief pregnancy and childbirth is a normal profound and precious event in each woman’s life, midwives work alongside other health care professionals if complications arise. Midwives can work in the community, in hospitals or in women’s homes.

WHO ARE MIDWIFERY STUDENTS?

The midwifery students are studying at Charles Darwin University and at the completion of their course they will be eligible to register as a midwife in Australia. They are under the direct supervision of a qualified and registered midwife at all times.

As part of their midwifery studies these students need to gain an understanding of pregnancy, birth and becoming a new mother from a woman’s perspective. This is best achieved by sharing some of the experiences a woman has during her pregnancy through to the early weeks after she has given birth.

WHAT WILL THE MIDWIFERY STUDENT DO?

The midwifery student will firstly meet you and your midwife at one of your antenatal visits. If you have agreed to have a midwifery student to be with you in your birth journey, you will be asked to sign a consent form. The midwifery student will:

- Attend some of your antenatal appointments.
- Contact you to talk about your pregnancy experiences, thoughts and feelings
Be with you at the birth of your baby if you wish to have this happen, and if the student is available at that time.

Contact you or visit you after the birth of your baby.

As a requirement to register as a midwife, students are required to keep a log of their clinical experiences. Information recorded in the log is de-identified.

The student midwife will work alongside your primary registered midwife

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- You will get to know the midwifery student and they will get to know you during your pregnancy.
- The midwifery student will be able to offer you support.
- It will be an invaluable experience for the midwifery student.
- The midwifery student will be able to learn about the experiences of women during the first few weeks with a new baby.
- This experience will also help the midwifery student to understand more about midwifery and how they can work with women.

If you wish to have more information on the Continuity of care journey please talk with your midwife, student midwife or contact the midwifery course coordinator.

The *continuity of care experience* or *follow through journey* as it is sometimes known is a recent addition to the midwifery curriculum and as such there is little research on its value to women. A study was conducted at Australian Catholic University in Victoria which looked at women’s experiences of the follow through journey. The results showed that women were very satisfied with the program mainly
because the outcome was an empowering pregnancy, birth and parenting experience (Rolls and McGuiness, 2007)

Rolls, C. McGuiness, B. 2007, Women’s experiences of a Follow Through Journey Program with Bachelor of Midwifery students, Women and Birth, vol 20:4, pp 149-152.

WHAT IF I CHANGE MY MIND?

Your views and experiences at this time are important and if you do not wish to continue to have a midwifery student with you at any time then please contact the person listed on your consent form immediately.

We respect your right to change your mind at any time. Your choice not to have a midwifery student with you will not affect your care in any way.

Thank you for your interest.

Remember: This is your pregnancy and it is your decision whether you wish to have a midwifery student with you. What you choose to share with the student is up to you.

For more information ask your midwife, or contact the Charles Darwin University Bachelor of Midwifery Course Coordinator: Virginia Skinner@cdu.edu.au
Useful links

Charles Darwin University  www.cdu.edu.au

CDU School of Health

Australian College of Midwives www.midwives.org.au

The Australian College of Midwives has information for consumers on its web site. You will find information on birth choices, what midwives do, breastfeeding and other useful information.

Australian Breastfeeding Association  www.breastfeeding.asn.au/

Maintains a 24 hour helpline -1800 mum2mum (1800 686 2 686)

Raising Children Network  http://raisingchildren.net.au/

An Australian Parenting resource. This is an initiative of the Australian government and provides information on parenting from infancy to the early years at school.

SOH Midwifery
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