

What is Continuity of Midwifery Carer?



Continuity of Midwifery Carer

Continuity of Midwifery Carer is a new way of working that will provide integrated, appropriate and seamless care for all women through their journey from pregnancy and birth to the early parenting period. This innovative model will start to be phased in during 2023 and will become the standard model of maternity care across Northern Ireland. This means that the majority of pregnant women will be able to benefit from Continuity of Midwifery Carer.

Each pregnant woman will have a named midwife who works in a small team of 7 to 8 midwives. The named midwife will be the key professional responsible for co-ordinating the woman's care. While all pregnant women need a midwife, many women will also need an obstetrician. Women may also need to see a range of other specialists including doctors, mental health professionals, allied health professionals or specialist midwives and nurses, depending on their particular needs. All of this will be delivered within the new model.

What will Continuity of Midwifery Carer mean for you?

Evidence shows positive outcomes of this model of care. If you are cared for under the Continuity of Midwifery Carer model it means you are:

- more likely to have a positive birth experience
- less likely to have an assisted birth
- less likely to have your baby early
- less likely to lose your baby at any stage of pregnancy
- less likely to need an epidural for pain relief during labour
- more likely to know the midwife who will be supporting you in labour

How will you be cared for?

- You will meet your named midwife at your booking appointment. This midwife will be responsible for planning and providing your care throughout your pregnancy.
- You will have a regular schedule of appointments with your midwife, or a member of your CoMC team. These can be flexible and arranged to suit both you and your midwife.
- If at any stage of your pregnancy you need to see a consultant or other medical specialist, your midwife can attend these appointments with you.

- You will have the chance to meet all the midwives in your CoMC team at ‘drop-in’ sessions, coffee mornings and antenatal education classes.
- You will be offered antenatal classes and active birth sessions, run by your team of midwives.
- Your CoMC Team will provide 24/7 on-call support for labour and birth. Your midwife will support you in all birth settings, (home, midwifery-led unit or delivery suite.)
- Your midwife will support your discharge from hospital, if that is where you had your baby, and will visit you at home after the birth.
- When discharged your CoMC team will co-ordinate the handover of care to your Health Visitor, to make sure you and your baby get the care you need.

References

Department of Health and Public Safety (DHSSPS) (2012) A Strategy for Maternity Care in Northern Ireland 2012-2018 (under review). Belfast: DHSSPS. [A strategy for maternity care in Northern Ireland 2012 - 2018 | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Department of Health (DoHNI) (2015) Delivering Care: a framework for nursing and midwifery workforce planning to support person centred care in Northern Ireland. Belfast: DoHNI. [Phase 1 Delivering care “A framework for nursing and Midwifery Workforce planning to support person centred care in Northern Ireland | HSC Public Health Agency \(hscni.net\)](#)

Department of Health NI (DoHNI) (2016a) Health and Well Being (2026) Delivering Together. Belfast: DoHNI. [Health and Wellbeing 2026 - Delivering Together | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Department of Health NI (DoHNI) (2016b) Systems not Structures Changing Health and Social Care. Belfast: DoHNI. [Systems, Not Structures: Changing Health and Social Care | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Department of Health NI (DoHNI) (2020b) Nursing and Midwifery Task Group Executive Summary. Belfast: DoHNI. [Nursing and Midwifery Task Group \(NMTG\) Report and Recommendations | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Medley N., Vogel JP., Care A., Alfirevic Z. (2018) Interventions during pregnancy to prevent preterm birth: an overview of Cochrane systematic reviews. Cochrane Database Systematic Review. 2018; 11 CD012505. [Interventions to prevent spontaneous preterm birth in high?risk women with singleton pregnancy: a systematic review and network meta?analysis - Medley, N - 2019 | Cochrane Library](#)

Northern Ireland Executive (NIE). (2020). New Decade, New Approach. Belfast [New Decade, New Approach Agreement \(parliament.uk\)](#)

Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). (2018a) Part 1: Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education. London: NMC. [education-framework.pdf \(nmc.org.uk\)](#)

Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). (2018b) Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment London: NMC. [student-supervision-assessment.pdf \(nmc.org.uk\)](#)

Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). (2019a) Part 3: Standards for pre-registration midwifery programmes. London: NMC. [standards-for-pre-registration-midwifery-programmes.pdf \(nmc.org.uk\)](#)

Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). (2019b) Standards of proficiency for midwives London: NMC. [standards-of-proficiency-for-midwives.pdf \(nmc.org.uk\)](#)

Ota E., Da Silva Lopes K., Middleton P., Flenady V., Wariki WMV., Rahman MO., Tobe-Gai R., Mori R. (2020) Antenatal interventions for preventing stillbirth, fetal loss and perinatal death: an overview of Cochrane systematic reviews. Cochrane Database Systematic Review. 2020; 12 CD009599. [Antenatal interventions for preventing stillbirth, fetal loss and perinatal death: an overview of Cochrane systematic reviews - Ota, E - 2020 | Cochrane Library](#)

Sandall J., Soltani H., Gates S., Shennan A., Devane D. (2016) Midwife-led continuity models versus other models of care for childbearing women. Cochrane Database Systematic Review. 2016; 4 CD004667. [Midwife-led continuity models versus other models of care for childbearing women - Sandall, J - 2016 | Cochrane Library](#)

[Print](#)