

# The Registered Midwife in Maternal, Child and Family Health services in the Australian Capital Territory

Developed: February 2023

Approved: Mr Anthony Dombkins – ACT Health: Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer

Next review: March 2024

The position of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Nursing and Midwifery Office is that Registered Midwives, who have completed a post graduate qualification in Maternal, Child and Family Health, can work to the full scope of practice in this speciality area in the ACT.

## Regulation

There are no statutory impediments for midwives to work in this clinical speciality. Maternal, Child and Family Health is not a registrable qualification therefore there are no legislative barriers to progressing this opportunity for midwives.

## Scope of Practice

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) Midwife Standards for Practice (2018) includes that 'midwives may extend their individual scope of practice beyond the postnatal period through additional education, competency and authorization', furthermore the Standards (NMBA, 2018) support that *the midwife's practice may extend to women's health, reproductive and sexual health, and child and family health care.*

## Professional Requirements

To work in Maternal, Child and Family Health in the ACT both Midwives and Nurses must:

- Be registered or be eligible for registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)
- Have a recognised, Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council certified, post graduate qualification in Child and Family Health or equivalent
- Complete local area competency assessments and orientation requirements

The professional title will be Maternal, Child and Family Health (or local service name) Registered Midwife or Registered Nurse or both RN/RM. For example Maternal and Child Health (MACH) Midwife, MACH Nurse, MACH RN/RM.

## Evidence

The ACT Nursing and Midwifery Office commissioned a curriculum ‘gap analysis’ report which established that both the Registered Nurse and the Registered Midwife undergraduate degrees at the University of Canberra equip graduates with the appropriate knowledge base to undertake the Maternal, Child and Family Health graduate qualification.

This work, aligned to a similar ‘mapping’ exercise in Western Australia, underpins the ACT position that a Registered Midwife, who has completed a qualification in Maternal, Child and Family Health that is recognised by Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council, can be employed and work across the full scope of clinical practice.

## References

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) Midwife Standards for Practice (2018)

Report on the mapping of maternal and child health content in bachelor of midwifery and bachelor of Nursing: University of Canberra. (2022) Dr Jan Taylor PhD, RM, FACM

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Australian College of Midwives (2022). *Position Statement on Midwives as Maternal, Child and Family Health Practitioners*. Canberra. ACM. Australian College of Midwives (2021).

*National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral*. Canberra. ACM.

Australian College of Nursing (2021). *Position Statement Maternal Child and Family Health Nursing*. Canberra. ACN.

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council – program accreditation

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