

# CHOOSING YOUR MIDWIFE

Homebirth NSW provides a directory of midwives offering homebirth services in NSW (this is not an endorsement). Different midwives have different personalities and practices, when selecting your midwife, we recommend you interview more than one midwife, preferably from different practices, to compare personality, prices and services and talk to past/present clients.

## QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- How long have you been a registered private midwife?
- Have you had any long periods away from practice? If so, what did you do to update skills and knowledge?
- Do you have regular peer review of your practice?
- Did you work in a hospital setting first? When?
- Do you combine hospital and homebirth work?
- How many births have you attended as primary caregiver, and as secondary midwife?
- How many were at hospital, birth centre and home?
- How many births per month/year do you attend?
- Do you have a specialty area of practice?
- What are your rates of transfer to hospital, caesarean section, assisted delivery & postpartum haemorrhage?
- Have you ever resuscitated a baby at home?
- Has a baby died under your care? Circumstances?
- Has AHPRA ever restricted your practice? Why?
- Are you certified in neonatal resuscitation? Do you carry oxygen to births?
- Do you prescribe/supply drugs that baby/I require?

## BIRTH PHILOSOPHY

- Why did you become a midwife?
- What do you feel your role is through pregnancy, birth & postpartum? Is it different for different women?
- In what ways are you involved in women's labours?
- What is your attitude to complementary therapies?
- What is your attitude to circumcision, vaccination?
- What are your views on weight gain in pregnancy?
- What do you advise for self-care during pregnancy?

## COLLABORATION/TEAM

- Will you provide all my midwifery care? What are your back-up arrangements if you are not available?
- Who do you work with as second midwife? Will I meet them before birth? Do I pay for them separately?
- If needed, who can I get a Medicare referral from?
- What happens if I need to see a specialist during my pregnancy/labour? Does this cost more, how much?
- In what circumstances would you recommend my baby see a pediatrician or doctor?
- Do you work with/offer discounts for doulas? Can you recommend any local to me?

## PRACTICAL MATTERS

### LEGAL, CONTRACTUAL, FINANCIAL

- What do you charge and what is included? Is payment a lump sum/segmented for different phases of care?
- When do I have to pay? Do you offer payment plans?
- What Medicare rebates are available?
- If we discontinue our relationship during pregnancy, do you refund some/all of fees (e.g. I don't want to/can't homebirth, you're unwilling/unable to continue my care?)
- Professional Indemnity Insurance - does it affect my care?
- Does my fee include Homebirth NSW membership?

### TIMING

- What happens if two clients labour at the same time? How many clients do you have due at the same time?
- What if you're working in hospital when I'm in labour?
- Are you likely to be away when my baby is due?

## SPECIFIC ISSUES...

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### **... DURING PREGNANCY**

- Prenatal appointments - length, location, number?
- Can I contact you between visits? How available are you?
- Do I need to book in to hospital? Which one and how?
- Why would you refer to obstetrical care? What's your rate?
- What happens if I go into labour <37 or >42 weeks?
- How do you feel about natural induction methods?
- What would you do in the event of twins or a breech baby?
- Do you require prenatal testing (Ultrasounds, Gestational Diabetes test, Group B Strep)? How do I access these?
- Do you provide birth classes or resources (books/DVDs)?
- Do you run homebirth support groups with other clients?
- Can you refer me to a local homebirth support group?

### **... DURING LABOUR AND BIRTH**

- When would you recommend hospital transfer? Would you stay with me? Can you be my primary midwife at hospital?
- What equipment do you/I need to provide (eg birth pool)?
- When will you come to me during labour? Have you ever missed a birth?
- Do you stay/leave during a long/'stalled' labor?
- How and when will you monitor my baby during labour?
- What happens if I have premature rupture of membranes?
- Do you perform episiotomies? What circumstances/rate?
- When do you cut the cord? Do you support lotus birth?
- What do you do if there is a post partum hemorrhage?
- Can you delay newborn checks? Any immediate ones?
- How long will you stay after I give birth?

### **... DURING THE POSTNATAL**

- Postnatal visits - length, location, what's included?
- Will you help me with breastfeeding? For how long? Can you refer me to a known lactation consultant?
- Do you have any specific breastfeeding training?
- How do I get my baby's birth certificate?



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