

The Midwife

a healthcare professional with an approach centred on your needs



Choosing a midwife
was completely
natural...

Dylan

**Santé
et Services sociaux**

Québec



A Listening Ear during your Pregnancy

The midwife takes the time to listen. She answers your questions, helps you to handle your pregnancy with confidence and discusses how you want to experience the birth of your child so that you will be prepared. During this time she emphasizes information, support and prevention.

A Comforting Presence during Delivery

The midwife stays with you and your family throughout the entire delivery and during the hours that follow. She is the one who will help you while you give birth. She offers psychological support and looks after you and your baby's well-being.

Constant Support upon your Return Home

The midwife comes to your home in the initial days following the birth of your baby and also provides the necessary follow-up during the first few months after birth. She monitors your health and that of your baby. She helps you, as parents, adapt to the arrival of your infant.



Linda accompanies Sarah and Michael throughout the pregnancy, during delivery, and long after that too...



Training

A practising midwife is licensed and is a member in good standing of the *Ordre des sages-femmes du Québec* (OSFQ). To become a midwife, a candidate must possess a bachelor's degree in the practice of midwifery. The Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières offers a four-year university program. As for all healthcare professionals, midwives must keep up to date through continuous professional development. For example, she is required to renew recognized certifications in obstetric and neonatal emergency.



The midwife puts all of her skills and know-how into practice to ensure the comfort and well-being of the mother and newborn.

Services Offered

In Québec, CLSCs offer midwifery services. Since our public health and social services network provides this service, women do not have to pay for it if they hold a valid Québec health insurance card. The *Midwives Act* states that women can give birth accompanied by a midwife in birth centres, hospitals or at home. A midwife is always available, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, throughout the pregnancy, labour, delivery and postpartum period, providing continuous care to her clients.

Eligibility for Services

All women of reproductive age are entitled to midwifery services. Since the midwife's field of practice is restricted to "normal pregnancies," she assesses the pregnant woman during the first meeting in order to ensure that she meets the eligibility criteria entitling her to receive midwifery services.

A midwife is a healthcare professional for whom pregnancy, delivery and the postpartum period are wholesome, natural and entirely normal events.

In her eyes, mothers possess the abilities necessary to bring their children into the world and care for them. A midwife's approach is centred on the needs of mothers and newborns in order to better respond to them. She provides continuous intervention and close follow-up during the prenatal, perinatal and postpartum periods. She also offers comprehensive care in accordance with the physical, psychological and social dynamics of the birth of a child, an absolutely unique event.

A Safe Approach

Midwives belong to a professional order in the same manner as doctors, dentists and pharmacists. Midwives have all the necessary skills, training and equipment to ensure parents that the birth of their child will take place in safe surroundings.

Since the midwife is a healthcare professional and expert in normal pregnancies and births, she screens for risks to the pregnant woman and her newborn early on. If complications arise, she administers the necessary care and ensures that a doctor is consulted or that the mother and child are transferred to a hospital.

Regardless of the circumstances surrounding the delivery, the midwife uses all of her skills and know-how to ensure the comfort and well-being of the mother and newborn. The midwife's expertise prevents unnecessary interventions. She creates a receptive atmosphere and considers not only the woman who is giving birth but her family as well.

Positive Results for Mothers' and Babies' Health

Research results from the midwifery pilot projects reveal less need for medical technology, a drop in the number of obstetrical interventions (C-sections, forceps deliveries, episiotomies), a significant decrease in third- and fourth-degree tears and fewer premature births and low-birth-weight babies.

For Sarah and Michael,
a **midwife** is a natural choice.

For more information

www.msss.gouv.qc.ca/infosanteclsc
www.avenirensante.com