

Decision-making framework summary: Midwifery

To be read in conjunction with the NMBA *Decision-making framework for nursing and midwifery (2020)*

Note: the order in which these issues are considered may vary according to context

Identify need/benefit

- Has there been a comprehensive assessment by the midwife to establish the woman or newborn's health and cultural needs?
- Has there been appropriate consultation with, and consent by, the woman?
- Is the activity in the best interests of the woman receiving care?

Reflect on scope of practice and midwifery practice standards

- Is this activity within the current, contemporary scope of midwifery practice?
- Have Commonwealth or state/territory legislative requirements (e.g. specific qualification needed) been met?
- If authorisation by a regulatory authority is needed to perform the activity, does the midwife or health worker have it or can it be obtained before the activity is performed?
- Will performance comply with midwifery standards for practice, codes and guidelines, as well as best available evidence?
- If other health professionals should assist, supervise or perform the activity, are they available?

Consider context of practice, governance and identification of risk

- Is this activity/practice/delegation supported by the organisation and/or by the educational institution (for students)?
- Have strategies to avoid or minimise any risk been identified and implemented?
- If organisational authorisation is needed, does the midwife or health worker have it or can it be obtained before performing the activity?
- Is the skill mix, model of care and staffing levels in the organisation adequate for the level of support/supervision needed to safely perform the activity/delegation?
- If this is a new practice:
 - Is there a system for ongoing education and maintenance of competence in place?
 - Have relevant parties and stakeholders been involved in planning for implementation?

Select appropriate, competent person to perform activities

(Delegation of care is made by a midwife)

- Have the roles and responsibilities of midwives and health workers been considered?
- Does the midwife or health worker have the necessary educational preparation, experience, capacity, competence and confidence to safely perform the activity either autonomously or with education, support and supervision?
- Are they competent and confident in performing the activity and accepting the delegation?
- Do they understand their accountability and reporting responsibilities?
- Is the required level of education, supervision/support available?

Yes to all

Action

- Perform the activity, **or** delegate to a competent person who then reconfirms consent from the woman receiving care, **and**
- document the decision and the actions, **and**
- regular review of the delegation providing guidance, support and clinically-focused supervision, **and**
- evaluate outcome.

No to any

Action

- Reconsider decision about whether to implement practice/activity/delegation, **and**
- consult/seek advice/collaborate, **and/or**
- refer if needed to complete the action, **and**
- if appropriate, plan to enable integration/practice changes (including developing/implementing policies, gaining qualifications as needed), **and**
- document the decisions and the actions, **and**
- evaluate outcome.