



# Midwifery

The term 'midwife' means 'with woman'. Midwifery involves the provision of care and support to women during pregnancy, labour and birth, and to women and their babies following birth. Midwives have a key role in health promotion and education for women, their babies and their wider family circle. Midwifery care is underpinned by a philosophical approach that views pregnancy as part of the life cycle, a normal healthy event. The concept of partnership between the woman and the midwife is fundamental to midwifery practice and is based on mutual trust, support and collaboration.

The provision of midwifery care is constantly evolving to respond to the changing needs of women in Ireland and their families. Midwives provide care in maternity hospitals/units, midwife-led units and increasingly through the provision of midwife-led services in the community. Midwives work in partnership with obstetricians and other members of the healthcare team in the provision of care, particularly to women with complicated pregnancies.

The syllabus of the Midwife Registration Education Programme provides an indication of the content. This allows for change to address the changing nature of Irish society and the environment in which midwives practise. The programme provides midwives with the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of women and their families in an individualised, culturally sensitive manner. This supports the vision for the maternity services set out in *Creating a Better Future Together – National Maternity Strategy 2016–2026* (Department of Health, 2016) to provide responsive, high-quality maternity care, which is woman-centred, equitable across different parts of the country, accessible to all, safe and accountable.

## Clinical placements - Midwifery

| Practice instruction | Minimum no. of weeks | Clinical experience   |
|----------------------|----------------------|---|
| Antenatal            | 16                   | Must include antenatal clinics and antenatal wards<br>May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• admissions, day and fetal assessment units</li><li>• preparation for birth and parent education</li><li>• placement with Clinical Midwife Specialists and Advanced Midwife Practitioners</li></ul> |
| Intranatal           | 16                   | Care of women in labour and birth which optimises the normal birth processes in any setting   |
| Postnatal            | 14                   | Includes postnatal care in any setting  |





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| Practice instruction                                      | Minimum no. of weeks | Clinical experience  |
|---|----------------------|--|
| Midwife-led care placement                                | 4                    | Includes any situation where the midwife is the lead professional in partnership with the woman planning, organising and delivering care to the woman, and referring to other professionals as appropriate.<br>May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• pre-pregnancy clinics antenatal clinics</li><li>• antenatal/parenthood education classes</li><li>• home birth services</li><li>• DOMINO services</li><li>• midwifery led units</li><li>• early transfer home services</li><li>• postnatal care provided by midwives in the community</li></ul> |
| High dependency care and care of the critically ill woman | 2                    | Provision of care to women in pregnancy, labour, birth or in the postnatal period who have high dependency needs and/or require monitoring or intervention that may include support for a single failing organ (HSE, 2014)   |
| Neonatal unit   | 4                    | SCBU/neonatal clinics  |
| Gynaecology   | 4                    | May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ward</li><li>• day ward</li><li>• theatre or outpatients</li></ul>  |
| Mental Health   | 2                    | May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• acute units</li><li>• day hospitals</li><li>• primary care settings</li><li>• focus on perinatal mental health where available</li></ul>  |
| Theatre and recovery                                      | 2                    | Must include experience of obstetric theatre and recovery  |
| Primary healthcare  | 2                    | May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• primary healthcare team</li><li>• child development clinics</li><li>• working with PHNs</li><li>• family planning clinics etc.</li></ul>  |
| Elective placement  | 2                    | Must be in an area relevant to midwifery practice which could be situated locally, nationally or internationally and is driven by the student and the student's learning needs   |

For more information:

<https://www.nmbi.ie/Education/Standards-and-Requirements>

You may also find [www.nmbi.ie](http://www.nmbi.ie) useful



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Cnámhseachais na hÉireann  
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