Midwifery 100 Years:

What is good regulation of a profession.

Ursula Byrne
Director of Regulation

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The 3 Pillars of a strong midwifery profession

Pillar 1: Education → competent practitioners

Pillar 2: Regulation

Pillar 3: A strong professional midwifery association

*International Confederation of Midwives.*
What is Regulation?

“Regulation is designed to safeguard the interests of service users and the public; assist the subjects of regulation to enhance their performance and create public confidence in the services provided by them.”

“Regulation occurs when an external agency imposes standards or rules on the behaviour and actions of others ... associated with the licensing or accreditation of professionals ...”

Regulation of midwives – what is it about?

- Setting and monitoring standards for midwifery education programmes
- Requirements & Standards for access to and maintenance on the Register, incl. protection of title
- Professional standards & guidance
  - Code of Professional Conduct & Ethics
  - Scope of Practice Framework
  - Practice standards
- Mechanisms to address breaches of standards
What happens if there is no regulation of midwives?

- Anyone can call themselves a midwife
- No requirement for any education or competence
- No standards for education programmes
- No standards for practice
- No mechanism to deal with poor practice or behaviour – except the criminal law

→ Women and their babies AT RISK.
The Benefits of Regulation of Midwives

- The provision of care by educated and regulated midwives leads to improved outcomes for women and babies. *The Lancet Midwifery Series 2014*

- Professional standards are upheld

- Confidence in the profession
What is Good Regulation?

A balance between under & over regulating:

- *Regulating Better, Department of the Taoiseach, 2004*

- *Right-touch Regulation (Revised), Professional Standards Authority, 2015*

- *Global Standards for Midwifery Regulation, International Confederation of Midwives, 2011*
Principles of Good Regulation

• **Necessity:** Is the regulation necessary?
• **Effectiveness:** Is the regulation going to be properly complied with and enforced?
• **Proportionality:** Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages of the regulation?
• **Transparency:** Have we consulted with stakeholders?
• **Accountability:** Who is responsible to whom and for what?
• **Consistency:** Are we applying best practice developed in one area when regulating other areas?

*(Regulating Better, 2004)*
Right-touch Regulation

• **Proportionate:** Only intervene when necessary.
• **Consistent:** Rules and standards joined up and implemented fairly.
• **Targeted:** Regulation should be focused on the problem.
• **Transparent:** Regulator should be open and keep regulations simple and user friendly.
• **Accountable:** Regulator should be able to justify decisions, and be subject to public scrutiny.
• **Agile:** Look forward and be able to adapt and to anticipate change.

*(Right-touch Regulation, 2015)*
The purpose of the standards is to describe the regulatory framework necessary for effective midwifery regulation.

The elements of midwifery regulation are set out in the standards document.

Founding values and principles.

Principles of good regulation.
The ICM standards provide a benchmark for global standardisation of midwifery regulation.

Two purposes:
1. The basis for review of existing regulatory frameworks.
2. Provide guidance and direction to countries seeking to establish regulatory frameworks for midwifery where none currently exist.
Re-establishing the midwifery identity:
“For the avoidance of doubt, it is hereby declared and recognised that midwifery is a separate profession to nursing.”

Section 2(2) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011.
Midwifery Regulation - NMBI

• Fully respect the separate identity of midwifery

• ‘Midwifery proof’ all we do

• Strengthen midwifery within the organisation

• Benchmark against models of good regulation

• Support the development of the profession – but know our scope of practice as a regulator
Thank you

Ursula Byrne
Director of Regulation

ubyrne@nmbi.ie
Ph. 01 6398570.