

PROPOSED RESOLUTION: ASSESSING AND PROMOTING PAN-CANADIAN MIDWIFERY LICENSURE

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BACKGROUND/RATIONALE

Pan-Canadian licensure ensures registered or Indigenous midwives can practice autonomously without restrictions or for clerks (fourth year student midwives) registered anywhere in Canada to practice or train anywhere else in Canada without the need for additional licensing administration or fees (1).

What makes midwifery unique when considering national licensure is our long history of Indigenous midwifery (2). Any movement on a pan-Canadian midwifery licence must include provisions for a pan-Canadian Indigenous midwifery licence, respecting community-based licensing and scope of practice considerations.

WHY NOW?

In response to the current trade war initiated by the Trump administration, the Canadian federal government has promised to eliminate federal barriers to interprovincial trade. This is consistent with former government recommendations to dismantle jurisdictional barriers for physicians, nurses and allied health professionals coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic (3, 4). The groundwork has already been laid to ensure medicine and nursing have greater mobility across the country.

We must ensure midwives are included as the federal government moves quickly to reduce jurisdictional barriers which could increase both the availability of midwives and uptake of midwifery care.

IMPROVING MIDWIFERY MOBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Consistent with calls from the Canadian Medical Association (1), Nurse's Association (5) and Nurse Practitioner's Association (6), it is time for our Midwifery Associations and Regulatory Council to assess the feasibility of pan-Canadian Midwifery Licensure and identify next steps to breaking down interjurisdictional barriers to promote midwifery mobility and sustainability.

In so doing, it may be possible to increase midwifery care provision, increase locum opportunities, allow midwives to seamlessly work across provincial borders, increase midwifery education consistency and support midwives to practice in their preferred models of care, in jurisdictions they choose to call home (1, 7). Given the significant rates of burnout and concerns around sustainability of the midwifery workforce in Canada and globally (8), considering pan-Canadian licensure may help strengthen our professional associations, increase exposure to different models of practice and ensure we are not losing early career midwives unable to practice in their preferred jurisdiction.

SPECIAL RESOLUTION(S)

Where the Government of Canada initiates the dismantling of interprovincial trade barriers for health professions, be it resolved that the Canadian Association of Midwives will ensure adequate representation of midwives so that we are included in any federally initiated processes to promote pan-Canadian licensure and health professional labour mobility.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Canadian Association of Midwives in combination with the National Council of Indigenous Midwives, the Canadian Midwifery Regulators Council and the Canadian Association for Midwifery Education on behalf of members will assess the feasibility of pan-Canadian Midwifery and Indigenous Midwifery Licenses and make recommendations to promote professional mobility and sustainability of midwives to increase the provision of midwifery services across Canada.

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