



March 2015

### Important dates

- 9 March – Health and Disability Conference Wellington
- 25 March – Council meeting
- 8 May – Council meeting
- 23 June – Perinatal and Maternal Mortality Review Committee Annual Report Day, Wellington

### An important message from the Chair about the Referral Guidelines

Dear Midwives

The coroner's report into the deaths of Casey and Kymani Nathan was released on 31 January. The Midwifery Council, like each of you, was deeply saddened by this tragedy as the death of a woman and her baby goes to the heart of what it is to be a midwife - the safety of mothers and babies is always our first priority.

The coroner has made a number of recommendations and these have been widely reported. The recommendations to the Midwifery Council are in relation to customised growth charts, the Guidelines for Consultation with Obstetric and Related Medical Services ([the Referral Guidelines](#)) and inter-professional obstetric emergency education.

The Council's primary role is to protect the health and safety of mothers and babies and it is committed to implementing the recommendations that will reduce risk and improve safety. You will be aware already:

- Midwives are required to undertake maternity emergency update days every year. For many years, in addition to this, a significant number of midwives have undertaken inter-professional obstetric emergency courses. Since April 2014, these courses (such as PROMPT and ALSO) are recognised as meeting as part of recertification compulsory requirements.
- The Midwifery Council requires midwives to follow the processes and requirements of the Referral Guidelines and refer to our obstetric and other specialist colleagues. If for some reason the Referral Guidelines are not followed as a result of a decision of or a discussion with the woman, the rationale for this and an ongoing plan must be well documented.

The Midwifery Council is well aware that most midwives practise as required by Midwifery Council within the Referral Guidelines, have the required conversations with women and their families and refer as per the Referral Guidelines to obstetric colleagues. However, it is important at times such as this that we pause and learn all we can from this tragedy and ensure that all midwives work within the frameworks that are in place for the safety of mothers and babies.

The Council has also noted the Coroner's findings on customised growth charts and is awaiting the recommendations of the PMMRC on the matter before making any decision on what further action it might take.



Dr Judith McAra-Couper  
Chairperson

## Applications for 2015/16 annual practising certificates

Around half of currently practising midwives have already applied online for their practising certificate for the 2015/16 year. If you have not applied, we urge you to do so as soon as possible. This is a [step by step](#) visual guide on how to apply. The [January/February newsletter](#) has more detailed information.

A reminder that the Council's bank account number is: **03 0502 0399402 00**. Payment is expected at the time of application.

If you have any issues, please call the Midwifery Council office and ask for assistance with your Practising Certificate 04 499 5040.

## Plastic APC cards

Our supplier AB Note issues plastic cards, together with a receipt, 5-10 days after application and payment has been confirmed, if your application is straightforward. It will take longer than this if we need to talk to you about your application or if you are not meeting the requirements of the Recertification Programme. If you want your plastic card before 1 April, please complete your application by 8 March.

## Expression of interest: Council s36 Competence Assessor

From time to time the Midwifery Council receives notifications concerning a midwife's competence. Under s36 of the Act, the Council must make inquiries into a midwife's competence if the notification is received under s34. It may also make inquiries under s36(4) if it has reason to believe that a midwife's competence may be deficient. Part of this inquiry will involve an assessment of the notification, the midwife's response and all relevant information for the Council to then make a decision whether or not it will proceed to a formal review of the midwife's competence.

This assessment screening role has been carried out until now by the Sorting Committee, a sub-committee of the Council. The Council has decided that this role is best carried out externally to the Council and it is now seeking expressions of interest from qualified and experienced midwives to carry out this task.

**If you are interested in becoming a s36 Competence Assessor, you should complete the [Expression of Interest](#).**



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