

Concord Birth and Wellness Center

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INFORMED CONSENT AGREEMENT **for Out-of-Hospital Birth**

Philosophy of Midwifery Care

The journey of pregnancy, birthing and parenting is a very intimate and intense adventure. The foundation of our care at Concord Birth and Wellness Center is RESPECT, HONESTY and TRUST; from midwife to woman and woman to midwife. A woman must trust and respect her body and health, and the midwife, in maintaining the traditions of midwifery, must monitor and safeguard these powerful, sacred rites of passage. Each woman has a very individual experience which deserves reverence and celebration. A woman has the right to choose where and with whom she feels the safest, most empowered and secure, to have the experience she desires. We are dedicated to providing the highest standard of maternity care in our community by offering an intricate balance of tradition and technology. Midwives are the facilitators of natural process and reserve intervention, invasive testing and procedures for situations outside the parameters of normal. We allow as much time as needed to listen, interact and educate, encouraging families to be proactive, to make truly informed decisions about their care.

Training and Experience

Concord Birth and Wellness Center was borne by Jeanne Browne, certified nationally by NARM (North American Registry of Midwives) as a Certified Professional Midwife (CPM), and locally by the New Hampshire Midwifery Council as a New Hampshire Certified Midwife (NHCM). Jeanne has been attending births in many capacities for over 12 years. She is a Certified Massage Therapist, trained as an Emergency Medical Technician, Professional Doula, and worked as Breastfeeding Counselor for NH Health and Human Services. She has spent many years filming births for educational videos and a life-long documentary! Her midwifery training has been through Birthwise Midwifery School in Maine (the only federally recognized/accredited midwifery school in the Northeast), a 3 year preceptorship at Longmeadow Farm Birthing Home, an intensive internship at Casa de Nacimiento on the Mexican/Texas border, and ongoing assisting/co-care with Grandmother NHCMs. Jeanne is the mother of 2 rowdy kids who were very happily breastfed (forever)! As required to maintain certification, continuing education and peer reviews are participated in regularly. Visits and births are attended by Jeanne Browne as primary midwife, as well as 1 or 2 other trained attendants; midwife, RN, Doula, student midwife. All midwives/birth attendants affiliated with Concord Birth and Wellness Center hold current certification in infant, child and adult CPR and Neonatal Resuscitation. Profiles of other midwives are available upon request.

Midwifery in New Hampshire

The state of New Hampshire requires midwives to be certified and licensed to practice midwifery. Our rules, regulations, and practice guidelines are available upon request, or can be found online <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rules/mid.html>. These rules and regulations clearly outline our scope of practice regarding eligibility for out-of-hospital birth, conditions requiring consultation or transfer of care, and terms regarding termination of midwifery services. Any complaints concerning a NH Certified Midwife can be submitted to the NH Midwifery Council (603)224-4596. For information about NHCMs, NH Midwives Association has a website www.nhmidwives.org

Transfer/Emergency Plan

In the event of an emergency or situation requiring transport to the hospital, transfer will be done by local ambulance service or car (depending upon urgency) to the nearest hospital which can offer services needed. The birthing family will be accompanied by the midwife to the hospital where she has consulted with the physician on-call. Collaboration and communication with medical staff will provide optimal care, while advocacy for the family's choices will be continuously safeguarded. No formal physician back-up is available for NH Certified Midwives. However, each midwife has established consultative relationships with physicians and other professionals in the area, and will refer and/or create a plan involving all interests. Hospital of transfer will be client's choice, if desired, in a non-emergency.

Midwifery Services

Prenatal Care: Free consultation, initial lab/bloodwork, monitoring of: weight, blood pressure, urinalysis, fetal heart, uterine growth, position of baby, hemoglobin (iron) checks, blood glucose screening (per client), Group B Strep culture (per client), nutritional counseling, birth education, additional testing and/or referrals, other discussion and counseling as needed, 36wk home visit (homebirth), informational handouts distributed, 24hr on-call availability

Birth: labor assessment, continuous skilled and supportive active labor assistance, fetal monitoring (with Doppler or fetoscope), monitoring maternal vital signs, management of birth of baby and placenta, breastfeeding assistance, suturing of perineal/labial tears as indicated, newborn assessment/exam, monitoring condition of mother and baby until stable (min. 2hrs after birth)

Postpartum Care: home visit at 1 and 3-4 days following birth, birth certificate, breastfeeding counseling, newborn metabolic screening test, postpartum exams for mother and baby at 6wks or as needed, birth control counseling, cervical cap fitting if desired, Pap smear (per client), 24hr on-call availability

Well Woman Care: annual whole woman wellness exam including: blood pressure, weight, breast exam and mammography referral as indicated, , hemoglobin check, Pap smear, HIV and STD testing as desired, lab work as indicated per client, nutritional counseling, contraceptive method counseling, cervical cap fitting

Other services available: Naturopathic family medicine, childbirth education classes, waterbirth, birth and postpartum doula services, bellycasting, birth photography/videography, referrals for any indicated services/bodywork/counseling

+All visits and interactions will be documented in client's confidential file.

Benefits and Risks of Out-of-Hospital Birth

Birth has some risk no matter where it takes place. However, statistically, planned homebirths (or birth center births) with a professionally trained midwife have been proven to be safer, have lower intervention rates and have better outcomes than hospital births. Studies regarding the safety of out-of-hospital birth are available, and recommended reading. These studies prove that out-of-hospital birth with a trained attendant greatly lowers the incidence of Cesarean sections, episiotomies, and fetal/maternal morbidity and mortality. It has been demonstrated that when a laboring woman is in a familiar and intimate environment), she feels safer and more positive to birth normally. She has greater control over how she labors and births and is able to act intuitively and trust her own power. She has lower levels of stress, fear and discomfort and higher levels of health, well-being and pride.

The risks of home birth are centered on the unavailability of immediate advanced technology. There are very few obstetrical emergencies in healthy, monitored, low-risk women; most problems arise slowly and allow time for a calm transfer. Midwives are trained and prepared to manage most complications at home (ie. Postpartum hemorrhage, neonatal resuscitation) however, certain emergencies do exist and the birthing family must be willing to accept the risk. In a surprise emergency, such as an unexpected life threatening birth defect, emergency measures will begin on site until emergency help (EMT service) arrives. Rarely, in or out of hospital, mothers or babies are injured or die during labor/birth. When weighing the benefits vs. risks of out-of-hospital birth, the expectant family must be aware and willing to assume responsibility for the risks involved.

Midwifery Service responsibilities include:

- Treat all clients with respect, trust and honesty and keep all information concerning their care confidential
- Determine client's eligibility of midwifery care throughout duration of pregnancy, labor, and postpartum period.
- Fully explain and obtain written consent regarding procedures, interventions, medications, treatments, including possible side effects, before administering to clients

- Inform clients at initial visit of approach to birth, equipment supplied at visits/birth and indication of it's use, including: prescription drugs to control hemorrhage, oxygen for mother and baby, resuscitation equipment, suture supplies in case of tears or episiotomy, antibiotic eye ointment and vitamin K for the newborn, electronic Doppler for monitoring fetal heart,
- Maintain current certification in Neonatal resuscitation and CPR
- Be on-call for client 24hrs by phone or provide back-up availability. If for some unforeseen reason primary midwife is not available for birth, another NHCM will attend.
- Provide a State of New Hampshire birth certificate for newborn which parents must file in the town of baby's birth

Responsibilities of midwifery **Client** include:

- Be strongly committed to and responsible for your own health, and the health of your baby, maintaining proper nutrition, regular exercise, and abstaining from alcohol and/or drug use.
- Follow midwife's protocols/recommendations and have all medications approved by my midwife (including over-the-counter) before taking.
- Contact baby's health care provider and arrange for newborn check-up/exam within 1 week after birth
- Regular attendance at prenatal and postpartum visits
- Obtain necessary supplies/equipment as requested by midwife for birth
- Provide primary person responsible for any children at birth
- Intend to breastfeed newborn for a minimum of 3 months
- Agree to transfer mother or infant to hospital if midwife determines the need. Review emergency transport procedures.
- Attend out-of-hospital childbirth classes, if this is your first baby with a midwife
- Know that most NH Certified Midwives DO NOT carry malpractice insurance

I/we have read the above information completely and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I/we understand and agree with the philosophy and scope of midwifery care as described above. I/we have been informed of the risks and benefits and desire an out-of-hospital birth. I/we choose the midwives at Concord Birth and Wellness Center to provide care during pregnancy, birth and postpartum.

Client Signature _____ Date _____

Partner Signature _____ Date _____

Midwife Signature _____ Date _____

EVERY WOMAN DESERVES A MIDWIFE