

Multi-Jurisdictional Midwifery Bridging Program

(excerpted from NAS Project Final Report, www.cmrc-ccosf.ca)

There is currently only one midwifery bridging program in Canada. The International Midwifery Pre-registration Program (IMPP) is a nine-month program based out of Ryerson University's G. Raymond Chan School of Continuing Education. The NAS research indicated a strong need for bridging availability to internationally-educated midwives living in all jurisdictions. Keeping in mind the small numbers of geographically dispersed IEMs in most jurisdictions and the increasing availability and use of distance education technologies, the NAS steering committee committed to conceptualizing an innovative approach to bridging to meet the needs of internationally-educated midwives in all regulated jurisdictions.

The committee reviewed:

- the results of a focused literature review on bridging and distance education technologies that was carried out in phase one of the NAS project;
- materials about the IMPP provided to the committee by Ryerson University's School of Continuing Education;
- data from an informal survey of midwifery education program's willingness and abilities to be involved.

Based on this information, the following conceptual framework was created in a series of in-person and telephone-based steering committee meetings, and approved in principle by the CMRC.

Framework for a Multi-jurisdictional Midwifery Bridging Program

The Multi-jurisdictional Midwifery Bridging Program aims to ensure a consistent national approach to midwifery bridging education and access to bridging for geographically-dispersed IEMs in all regulated jurisdictions.

Who?

The bridging program will be designed for internationally-educated midwives who have experience in antepartum, intrapartum, and postpartum care and who have the ability to work in the full scope of Canadian practice and with the skill-set that will enable them to reach registration requirements via the length of the bridging program.

Why?

The bridging program will a) fill any gaps identified in regard to the competencies listed in *Canadian Competencies for Midwives*, b) integrate IEMs into the professional culture of Canadian midwifery, c) enable applicants to meet requirements for registration, and d) assist midwives to obtain work as registered midwives.

What?

A set menu of modules will form the basis of the national program. Module topics will be derived from an analysis of common gaps in knowledge, education, or experience in relation to Canadian requirements for achieving midwifery registration and a successful

career as a midwife in Canada. Provinces/territories may require additional courses beyond the basic program.

The program will contain both clinical, didactic (knowledge based), and philosophical (model of practice) components, and include a clinical placement. It will emphasize the midwife's role as a primary caregiver.

Modules will be available in both English and French.

How?

The program will be delivered using distance education technologies wherever feasible. In-person intensives will be held in order to address hands-on skills and cover topic areas that do not lend themselves to learning at a distance; they will be offered in as many sites as is possible given available resources and educational feasibility (it is anticipated that intensives may require a minimum number of participants both to provide effective training and to be cost-effective). At least one clinical placement will be included and it will take place in the applicants' home province or territory. There will be at least one province/territory specific module that will provide an orientation to jurisdiction specific topics such as legislation, expectations for record-keeping, data collection, etc.

Modules will be offered via educational institutions, not by regulators. It is envisioned that a variety of institutions may offer each module and candidates may choose to mix and match from various programs or to complete an inclusive program such as the IMPP to meet their requirements.

A mechanism for pre-assessment of prior learning and experience will be developed so that gaps can be adequately identified and addressed, and programs individualized as much as possible. Clinical assessment of candidates (via Objective Structures Clinical Exams) will be included as part of the student evaluation process.

Other factors:

- The focus in developing this pan-Canadian program is on efficiency, effectiveness, flexibility, and harmonization.
- Cross cultural training for steering committee members, regulatory staff, educators, and clinical instructors is critical.
- It is expected that the IMPP courses will form the basis for many of the topics/courses needed, and the steering committee plans to work with them as much as possible so as not to reinvent the wheel.
- It is also expected that other institutions may already offer courses that can be easily adapted for inclusion (eg evidence-based practice, introduction to the Canadian health care system).

The CMRC accepts that funding may need to be secured first for a jurisdictional area that includes a smaller grouping of provinces and territories, and a bridging program designed first for this area. However, all members of the CMRC are committed to working towards the national vision outlined in this conceptual framework, and all work done will take this into consideration.