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Midwife Peer Review Process

Peer review is a process in which midwives present accounts of specific pregnancy, birth histories and outcomes to a group of peers for consideration and feedback. Peer review is an important tool for accountability among midwives, continuing education, and professional peer support. It is a tool for improving the quality of care midwives provide; it is not a disciplinary one. On-going peer review is a requirement of NARM (North American Registry of Midwives) for continued CPE (Certified Professional Midwife) credentialing and a requirement for Vermont State licensure. It has always been included in the Standards of Practice of the VMA (Vermont Midwives Alliance). Peer review is confidential in order to protect the privacy of the birthing woman and her family and to promote open communication and trust among midwives.

Each practicing midwife is required to participate in four peer reviews every two years. Specific situations that mandate peer review are enumerated in the Rules and Regulations established by the Office of Professional Regulation. These reviews usually take place during VMA meetings which are held six times a year. Peer review is also available during regional and national meetings of the Midwives Alliance of North America. Peers will be defined as Vermont State Licensed Midwives or midwives holding CMP credentials. Participation is defined as presenting a birth history or providing feedback.

The Peer Review Committee of the Vermont Midwives Alliance will provide Peer Review Forms, inform the membership which peer reviews are being conducted, and make certain that a record is kept of attendance at these sessions. For their own records, midwives may keep their own form without identifying information on it. The committee is also responsible for organizing a peer review when deemed necessary between regular scheduled meetings. The committee is only responsible for organization and record keeping. All midwives who are present conduct the review process itself.