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## Position Statement

# Role of the Midwife in Research

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### Background

The ICM International Code of Ethics for Midwives (2014) states that “*Midwives use up-to-date, evidence-based professional knowledge to ensure safe birthing practices in all environments and cultures (maintain competence)*”, and that “*Midwives develop and share midwifery knowledge through a variety of processes, such as peer review and research*”.

The ICM believes that all women deserve the highest quality, culturally relevant, evidence-based health midwifery services.

The ICM further believes that midwives have a role in, and responsibility for advancing midwifery knowledge within the profession, thereby improving the health of women and their newborns.

### Position

The ICM urges:

- Midwives, involved in the advancement of knowledge through research, to adhere to ICM’s most current ‘*Guidelines for Ethical Research*’.
- Midwives to maintain records and create/contribute to national and international databases on the quality, cost, safety and effectiveness of midwifery care.
- Midwives to understand and adhere to the principles of ethical codes for researchers as stipulated in the Declaration of Helsinki.
- Midwives to design/participate in studies that support and promote holistic and evaluate the effects of using technology as an intervention during childbirth.
- That research on the childbearing cycle maintains a holistic approach that includes the physiological, psycho-social, cultural and spiritual aspects of the health of women and newborns.
- That midwives, be responsible for promoting and participating in the design, implementation and evaluation of studies within their area of expertise.

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- That midwifery education programmes, in line with the Global Standards for Midwifery Education, include the theory and practical application of research so that midwives are able to appraise, interpret and critically apply appropriate research findings to ensure their practice is evidence-based.

### **Recommendations**

Member Associations are encouraged to adopt a similar statement or use this one to promote the role of the midwife in research. Member Associations are urged to demand that midwives are represented on research and ethics committees and to facilitate individual midwives in joining and contributing to the work of such committees; as well as to support and provide resources for midwifery research whenever possible.

### **Related ICM Documents**

ICM. 2011. Core Document. International Code of Ethics for Midwives.

ICM. 2014. Guidelines for ethical research collaboration across international and culturally diverse communities.

ICM. 2014. Core Document. International Code of Ethics for Midwives.

### **Other Relevant Documents**

World Medical Association. Declaration of Helsinki. Ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects. WMA. 1984, updated 2008

### **Adopted at Glasgow Council meeting, 2008**

Reviewed and adopted at Prague Council meeting, 2014

*Due for next review 2020*