



Public Home Birth Program Policy

1. Purpose

The *Public Home Birth Program Policy* sets out the mandatory requirements to ensure maternal and newborn services are safe, integrated, effective and responsive to the individual needs of women and their babies when having a planned home birth under the WA health system Public Home Birth Program.

The Policy should be read in conjunction with the MP 0058/71 *Admission Policy*.

This Policy is a mandatory requirement under the *Clinical Services Planning and Programs Policy Framework* pursuant to section 26(2)(c) of the *Health Services Act 2016*.

This Policy supersedes Operational Directive 0482/13 *WA Health Policy for publicly funded Home Births including guidance for consumers, health professionals and health services (Revised October 2013)*.

2. Applicability

This Policy is applicable to all Health Service Providers.

To the extent that requirements contained within this Policy are applicable to the services purchased from contracted health entities, WA health system entities are responsible for ensuring these requirements are accurately reflected in the relevant contract and managed accordingly.

3. Policy requirements

Health Service Providers providing a Public Home Birth Program must have evidence based policies in place which adhere to and align with the *Public Home Birth Program Standard* including documented clinical risk assessment and management processes. These policies must document the following:

- consent to enrol and process for transfer from home to hospital
- mode of transport to hospital
 - by ambulance urgent and non-urgent
 - by private vehicle
- refusal to transfer to hospital on clinical advice from the midwife/health professional
- the role of the primary midwife, support midwife and doulas
- role and responsibilities of the booking/receiving maternity hospital
- minimum equipment list required to attend homebirths including for maternal /newborn resuscitation and obstetric emergencies.
- safe transport and storage of oxygen.

Health Service Providers who do not currently provide a Public Home Birth Program must have documented care pathways for consultation, referral and / or admission for women from the Public Home Birth Program who are booked to their hospital.

4. Compliance monitoring

Health Service Providers are responsible for monitoring and ensuring compliance with this Policy.

The System Manager may request that Health Service Providers submit clinical data and other compliance evidence information in relation to the requirements of this Policy. In these cases the System Manager will work with Health Service Providers to agree on the information and timeframes within which this is to be provided.

5. Related documents

The following documents are mandatory pursuant to this Policy:

- [Public Home Birth Program Standard](#)

6. Supporting information

The following information is not mandatory but provides best practice information to support the implementation of this Policy:

- N/A

7. Definitions

The following definition(s) are relevant to this Policy.

Term	Definition
Home Birth	Where a woman opts to give birth at home with midwifery care
Maternity Hospital	Service that includes the assessment, management and treatment of women and babies during pregnancy, labour, birth and the postnatal period
Public Home Birth Program	Where a planned homebirth is governed by a WA Health Service Provider.

8. Policy contact

Enquiries relating to this Policy may be directed to:

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9. Document control

Version	Published date	Effective from	Review date	Effective to	Amendment (s)
MP 0141/20	10 August 2020	10 August 2020	August 2023	5 July 2021	Original version
MP 0141/20 v.2.0	5 July 2021	5 July 2021	August 2023	Current	The amendment is for a current condition listed in section 2.5 of the Standard (Conditions Requiring antenatal consultation as to eligibility) is moved to section 2.4 (Exclusion Criteria).

10. Approval

Initial approval	Nicole O'Keefe, Assistant Director General, Strategy and Governance Division Department of Health
	07 August 2020
Current version approved	James Williamson, Assistant Director General, Clinical Excellence Division, Department of Health
	30 June 2021

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