



Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto

Client Package

Hello!

Thank you for considering midwifery care with Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto (SGMT), we look forward to being a part of your reproductive care.

Our Practice

Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto (SGMT) is a group of midwives who offer care to families from the City of Toronto, particularly those from the downtown area, and from the Indigenous community. We have privileges at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, where our hospital births take place. We also have privileges at the Toronto Birth Centre. The aim of our practice is to provide culturally safe care and midwifery services more accessible. We provide midwifery care throughout pregnancy, labour, birth, and the first 6 weeks postpartum.

Vision statement

Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto respects the beauty and power of nature and creation. We believe that birth is a profound and awesome event.

Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto is a group of primary caregivers who provide high quality care to our clients and their families. We take into account the spiritual, emotional, mental and physical experiences of the childbearing year.

We seek to improve the health and well being of families from diverse cultures in the Toronto area. We envision care for the Indigenous community that enables people to reclaim control of birth, including the choice to incorporate traditional teachings and ceremonies. Our work as midwives belongs to and serves the pregnant person, their family, and their community.

We aspire to support and mentor more members of the Indigenous community to enter into health professions including Midwifery.

Guiding beliefs – Our approach to care

As midwives, we believe having a baby is a normal and healthy part of someone's life. We are open to discussing how this experience affects your relationships, your family and your community.

In midwifery care, you will be the primary decision-maker. This means that we expect you to take responsibility for your healthcare choices. The midwife's role is to share information you need in order to make the best decisions for yourself as you go through this process, as well as to provide safe care in complicated or emergency situations. Midwives are skilled at helping our clients to have as normal and natural a birth as possible, and we try to minimize the use of technology. If it becomes necessary, we will help you to access interventions such as pain relieving drugs and more specialized care.

We think it is important for us to get to know one another and develop a trusting relationship. You will meet with midwives and students from our group in your pregnancy, and can expect to have people you know at your birth and taking care of you and your baby for postpartum care.

You will have the opportunity to talk with us about choosing where you would like to give birth. We are experienced in attending births both at home and in hospital. We carry equipment to make giving birth outside the hospital a safe option.

Process of care

In your pregnancy, you will visit with midwives and supervised students for prenatal care. You are welcome to bring support people and children along to your visits if you choose. These visits are every month at first, and then become more frequent towards the end of your pregnancy. During these appointments we will check on the progress of your pregnancy, including checking your blood pressure, urine, baby's heartbeat, position and growth. There will also be time for you to ask questions, and for us to share information. We can also order tests such as blood work, ultrasound and physical exams as needed. Our clinic visits are located at our office, 525 Dundas Street East, on the second floor.

Two midwives will be assigned to you as your care team. You will get to know these two midwives well during your course of care by alternating which one you see at every visit. They work in a pair to cover each other for time off call. This way one of the midwives you know will always be available for you, except during holiday months or in exceptional circumstances.

When you are in labour, your midwife and possibly their student come to your home or meet you at the hospital. They stay with you to help you with comfort measures. They check on the well-being of you and your baby. When having a hospital birth, we aim to ensure that you spend as little time as possible in the hospital. We call a second midwife, senior student, or another trained attendant to come to the birth of your baby at home or in hospital. In the first few hours after your baby is born, we continue to care for both of you. This includes checking your baby head to toe, monitoring your recovery, and helping with breast/chestfeeding. If all is well, we encourage you to be home, tucked into bed, within a few hours after the birth.

We visit you within 24 hours of your birth and at least twice more within the first week, whether you are at home or in the hospital. These visits are for checking in about how feeding is going, baby's weight gain, and you and your baby's progress. You will have regular appointments up to the final visit at six weeks postpartum. At this time we give you a copy of your records and a letter for your family doctor.

Throughout your care you can always contact a midwife by pager if you have urgent concerns and when you are in labour.

Students

Students are an important part of our practice. They are generally involved in all aspects of your care, including prenatal visits, the birth, and postpartum care. They want to get to know you as we do during their time in the practice. Students develop midwifery skills by being involved in your care. As they gain experience they are able to care for you more and more independently. Our job as teachers is to help you get to know the students we work with and to provide safe supervision. We welcome your feedback about student involvement and our role as teachers.

Time off

Midwife teams cover each other to take every other weekend off call. The midwives also take longer holiday periods. During the longer holiday periods, midwives from another team will be on call for you and see you for any appointments if necessary. You will always be informed by your coordinating midwives who to see for your regular visits and who is available to you for labour or urgent concerns. Clear instructions will also be left on your midwife's pager message.

Scope of practice

As midwives we focus on providing care to healthy, low-risk people and babies. We are good at knowing what is "normal." We can tell when things are going outside of this normal range. We work within the College of Midwives of Ontario's standards about when to make a special plan of care, to consult with a doctor, or in complicated situations to transfer your care to an obstetrician. In a consultation we ask you to see another health care provider for recommendations and/or treatment for the particular concern we have identified.

In a transfer of care, a doctor becomes your primary care provider. Doctors use their experience and expertise to give you the safest care until the problem resolves. If we have to transfer your care, we stay involved and offer you information, support, advocacy, and visits as appropriate.

Other health care providers we may work with include an obstetrician, pediatrician, family doctor, nurse or nurse practitioner, lactation consultant, counsellor, or traditional healer. We encourage you to include complementary therapies such as massage therapy, chiropractic care, and naturopathy as part of your care if you are interested.

To read more about our College's standards and midwives' scope of practice, please visit cmo.on.ca or speak with one of us. And please let us know if you would like to read our practice protocols.

Confidentiality

We respect your right to privacy and confidentiality about the care you receive from us. We follow the law about how and with whom we can share information about you and your baby. We may ask you to sign consent forms to allow us to share information with other health care providers, or agencies where you use services. This is always your choice.

We are obliged by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to contribute information about all the clients we care for to BORN, the Birth Outcomes Registry Network, which aims to facilitate and plan maternal-newborn care in Ontario. Please talk with your midwives about what information is included in this registry and any thoughts and concerns you have about our collecting it.

Part of our work involves teaching and ongoing learning. One of the ways we do this is to share anonymous stories about our experiences. We also may make our records available for research and statistical analysis. Please let us know if you do not want us to share your records or stories in this way.

We work as a group practice. We meet regularly to discuss and plan the care we provide to our all of our clients. Please tell us if there are parts of your history or experience that you want to keep private.

Ask us for a copy of our Privacy Policy if you would like to review it.

SGMT Diversity Statement

As you are likely aware, SGMT is an Indigenous-focused midwifery clinic. We envision midwifery care for Indigenous communities that enables clients and their families to reclaim control of birth for themselves, including the choice to incorporate traditional teachings and ceremonies. At SGMT we have a set of core values, one of which is Equity: to resist injustice to create the space and responsiveness needed for everyone to have access to the resources, opportunities and power they need to self-determine, make informed choices, and to reach their full, healthy potential as they understand it.

We believe that diversity in the midwifery profession enhances the profession, improves the care that we provide to all of our clients, and better serves our diverse communities.

As an Indigenous-led organization we deeply understand that there are populations of people that have been and continue to be denied equitable healthcare. The healthcare system was not designed for Indigenous people, and has historically been used against Indigenous people. This is a reality for many people accessing healthcare in this country. As healthcare providers it is our responsibility to build a more equitable healthcare system for all. We believe that healthcare needs are often best met by our fellow community members, those who have a lived understanding of our realities, who know the barriers and the joys we share, who can understand our lives and who reflect us and our families. It is our goal at SGMT to increase the diversity of the midwifery profession through our hiring practices and training midwifery students.

Your team of midwives and students is committed to your health and wellbeing. At SGMT we are actively committed to health equity for all, and providing educational opportunities for midwifery students who have been historically left out of midwifery is crucial to this. We reject all forms of discrimination toward our staff, students, midwives and clients based on gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, sexual preference, parental status, age, disability or socioeconomic origins. **We do not accept requests for changes in midwives or students based on the above grounds.** We do however recognize the importance and benefit of equity-deserving populations being served by their own community members. We strive to assign midwives to clients from a shared community (for example Indigenous midwives for Indigenous clients), serving our communities is what we love about being midwives.

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