

**DISTRICT HEALTH BOARDS
QUALITY AND LEADERSHIP
PROGRAMME FOR MIDWIVES COVERED
BY THE MERAS AND NZNO EMPLOYMENT
AGREEMENTS**

AUGUST 2014 REVISION

NOTE: THIS REVISED DOCUMENT IS BASED ON AMENDMENTS PROPOSED AT A MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF DHB MIDWIFERY LEADERS, MERAS, NZNO AND NZCOM IN MAY 2013.

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1.0 Introduction

All midwives have a professional responsibility to provide care which is consistent with the accepted standards, philosophy and ethics of the profession. They also have a responsibility to maintain their competence, regularly review their practice and develop professionally as midwives.

DHBs, as the primary employer of midwives also have a responsibility to support the professional development of their midwifery workforce. The development, support and recognition of midwifery expertise by DHBs encourages quality care for women and their babies when they access DHB maternity services.

This Quality and Leadership Programme (QLP) provides a framework for employed midwives and their employers to develop mutual responsibilities in a manner which models partnership between employer and employee. It is based on the standards of the midwifery profession which apply to all midwives regardless of practice setting or employment status.

The Quality and Leadership programme:

- is a structured framework which supports and, assists midwives to further develop knowledge and skills
- encourages and supports midwives to provide quality care for women and their babies when they access DHB maternity services
- assists midwives who participate to develop a range of transferable clinical, leadership and personal skills
- encourages and values professionalism
- provides a mechanism through which a DHB can recognise, value, and encourage the professional development of midwives.
- helps to identify and prepare midwives for leadership roles
- provides a framework for midwives to contribute to DHB quality activities

2.0 Background

The professional development pathway within midwifery offers a variety of paths a midwife can take depending on the experience she wants to gain. This makes it even more critical that the QLP for employed midwives recognises these realms of practice and incorporates a way of acknowledging and valuing the different roles a midwife may take in her professional life.

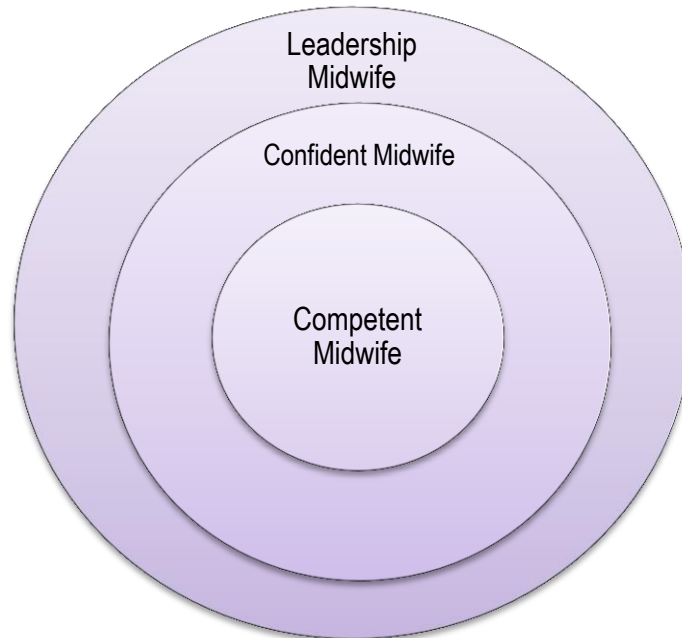
The QLP has been developed in conjunction with the New Zealand College of Midwives and as such reflects the Philosophy, Scope of Practice, Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice and the model of care that all midwives work in partnership with women in whatever setting they practice. It strives to recognise and reward leadership, education, research, clinical practice development, reflective practice and commitment to the development of DHB maternity services. As midwives move between employment and self-employment this national framework is transportable and recognises the skills a midwife gains wherever she works. One of the essential components is that the QLP incorporates and builds onto the requirements for an annual practising certificate by the Midwifery Council of New Zealand.

2.1 DHB requirements

For the programme to work effectively and efficiently DHB employers must ensure that the following requirements are met:

- Provide every midwife with a structured orientation/familiarisation programme
- Provide every midwife with an annual performance appraisal
- Provide every midwife with the minimum study/professional development leave as agreed in the DHBNZ MERAS/NZNO MECA
- Ensure there are QLP assessors available to meet the demand for portfolio assessment within a 6 week timeframe

3.0 Domains of Practice



The circles in the diagram parallel the growth and maturity that is marked within a tree. These circles contain the domains of practice for midwifery professional development. Midwives develop their midwifery skills and knowledge through experience and ongoing learning. Each domain builds on the previous one; a midwife adds value to the service and the organisation as she grows through the domains. The domains identified are intended to show this development.

3.1 Competent Domain

All midwives are competent to practice on registration, although some may have conditions placed on where they practice (e.g. overseas trained midwives registering in New Zealand) and with increasing midwifery experience, become more confident as practitioners. On-going competence is a necessity of recertification. Employers require competent midwives as employees of their maternity services and as such

support all employed midwives to be able to demonstrate that competence. A midwife on the competent domain is likely to be a midwife who although able to function as a competent practitioner needs to develop skills and experience to function confidently in the service.

3.2 Confident Domain

A midwife on the confident domain has the necessary skills and experience to function confidently within her employed practice area. They will have a minimum of 12 months clinical practice experience and will be using evidence informed practice. They will be confident in handling complex clinical situations. It is anticipated that all midwives will be eligible for this domain on completion of their Midwifery first year of practice (MFYP) programme, or on completing the requirements stipulated by the Midwifery Council for overseas midwives, or midwives returning to practice after a career break; or on completion of the DHB orientation/familiarisation process for other midwives. If midwives at the conclusion of these programmes are deemed not to be eligible to apply for this domain then it would be anticipated that they will be engaged in a supportive programme facilitated by their DHB to assist them in becoming a confident practitioner

3.3 Leadership Domain

A midwife on the leadership domain has significant midwifery experience and is able to communicate this to colleagues and demonstrate this clinically. They are able to demonstrate contextual knowledge and professional understanding and are a role model and resource within the maternity service. A midwife on the leadership domain will take a lead role in quality improvement, innovation and practice development in their practice area.

Examples of Leadership domain activities include: Safe sleep champion; Health and safety rep; implementing introduction of new equipment or process; hand hygiene champion; infection control rep; medication safety champion, shift co-ordination etc.

4.0 Participation in the programme

4.1 Midwives currently employed

Registered midwives employed by the DHB with a current annual practising certificate with no conditions and over 12 months experience may apply for confident or leadership domain at any time. Midwives are responsible for initiating their own application.

4.3 Midwives previously employed in a DHB in NZ

Midwives who have participated in the QLP at another DHB in NZ will be transferred onto the same Domain upon completion of the orientation/familiarization programme and will be expected to revalidate their Domain within one year from the date of the last validation.

4.4 Midwives previously self-employed

Midwives who have 12 months experience can apply for Domain review on completion of the orientation/familiarization programme whenever they are able to demonstrate the requirements for Confident or Leadership Domain.

4.5 Midwives new to New Zealand

Midwives employed from overseas will be employed on the Competent Domain until they have completed the orientation/familiarization programme and any Midwifery Council requirements which then entitle them to a full Annual Practising Certificate with no restrictions on practice. Following this they may apply for Confident or Leadership domain.

4.6 Midwives returning from leave

In a situation where a midwife takes an extended break such as maternity leave, they will be entitled to return to work on their previous Domain; however they will be expected to demonstrate at their next annual performance appraisal/review that their practice is consistent with their Domain.

4.7 Midwives returning to practice after a career break

Midwives who are returning to midwifery after a career break will be employed on the competent domain until they have completed the orientation/familiarization programme and any Midwifery Council requirements which then entitle them to a full Annual Practising Certificate with no restrictions on practice, after which they may apply for a domain.

4.8 New graduate midwives

New graduate midwives will remain on the Competent Domain until they have completed the orientation/familiarization programme, their Midwifery First year of

Practice Programme and their first Midwifery Standards Review when they can then apply to move to Confident Domain.

5.0 Domain Requirements and Evidence

Each Domain builds on the evidence from the previous Domain/s.

Competent Domain	
Requirements	Evidence
i. Meets Midwifery Council requirements for an Annual Practising Certificate as a midwife.	Holds current Midwifery Annual Practising Certificate
ii. Is learning the responsibilities, priorities, policies, standards and practices of the organisation.	Is in the process of completing the organisation familiarisation/orientation programme
iii. Meets the requirements of the position description.	Satisfactory performance appraisal/review
iv. Practises autonomously on the basis of evidence-informed practice.	A reflection on their current midwifery practice, this may be their Midwifery Standards Review reflection on practice
v. For new graduate midwives is undertaking the MFYP programme	Is enrolled on the Midwifery First Year of Practice programme
vi. For overseas midwives new to New Zealand is undertaking the Midwifery Council programme for overseas midwives	Is enrolled in the Midwifery Council programme for overseas midwives.

Confident Domain	
Requirements	Evidence
i. Has completed a Midwifery standards review in the past two/three years and holds an annual practicing certificate with no conditions	MSR certificate Holds current Annual Practising Certificate without conditions (Interim APC does not meet requirement)
ii. Meets the requirements of the position description.	Satisfactory performance appraisal/review

iii.	Practises autonomously on the basis of evidence-informed practice.	A reflection on their current midwifery practice, this may be their Midwifery Standards Review reflection on practice
iv.	Has consolidated their midwifery knowledge and skills over a minimum period of 12 months.	Satisfactory performance appraisal/review and evidence from professional portfolio
v.	Is confident in handling complex clinical situations	Satisfactory performance appraisal/review or Midwifery Standards Review - Feedback from LMCs
vi.	Demonstrates confidence in midwifery practice within current role	Satisfactory performance appraisal/review and evidence from professional portfolio

Leadership Domain		
Requirements	Evidence	
i.	Has completed a Midwifery standards review in the past two/three years and holds a full annual practicing certificate with no conditions	MSR certificate Holds current Annual Practicing Certificate without conditions (Interim APC does not meet requirement)
ii.	Meets the requirements of the position description.	Evidenced in performance appraisal/review
iii.	Practises autonomously on the basis of evidence-informed practice.	A reflection on their current midwifery practice, this may be their Midwifery Standards Review reflection on practice
iv.	Has significant midwifery experience. Is able to communicate this to colleagues and demonstrate this clinically.	Evidenced via performance appraisal/review and satisfactory peer review from 2 colleagues and 2 LMCs
v.	Demonstrates contextual knowledge and professional understanding.	Description of how they see themselves as a midwife particularly in relation to the code of conduct, code of ethics, and the contractual framework (can be linked to requirement iii)
vi.	Is a role model and resource for her workplace within the maternity service.	Evidenced via performance appraisal/review and other evidence such as an example of a project she champions, guidelines written, presentations to colleagues etc. Satisfactory peer review from 2

		colleagues and 2 LMCs
vii.	Undertakes midwifery-related education, additional to compulsory requirements.	Evidence of educational achievement in portfolio with commentary on how this education has supported practice at a leadership domain
viii.	Takes a midwifery leadership role in quality improvement and innovation in her workplace	Provides a report of leadership activity for portfolio (see appendix 3)
ix.	Takes a midwifery leadership role in her workplace.	Evidenced by performance review or other evidence Reflection on leadership style Satisfactory peer review from 2 colleagues and 2 LMCs

6.0 Domain Progression

6.1 Domain Review

Once a midwife has decided that she meets the requirements of a domain she may apply for a domain review. To do this she completes a domain progression application form (Appendix 2) and presents her portfolio to a QLP assessor. This should include a recent performance appraisal.

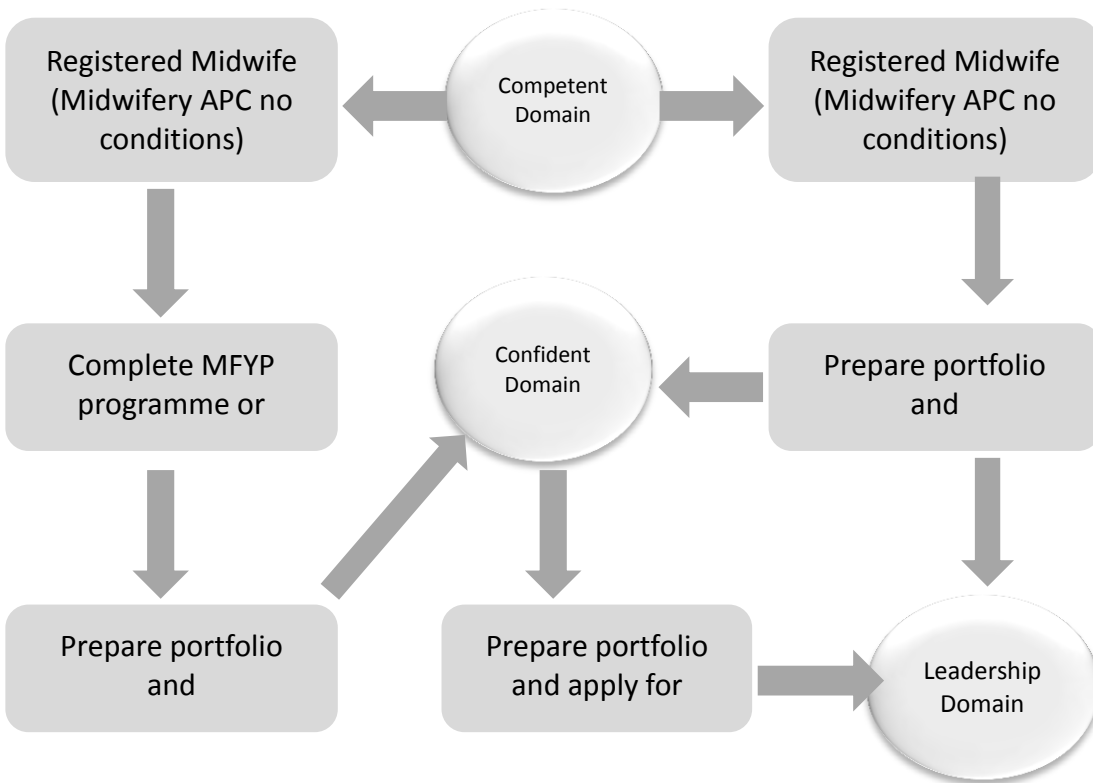
6.2 Competent to Confident Domain

- has completed the requirements of the Competent Domain
- portfolio reflects requirements of Confident Domain
- has completed any Midwifery council requirements and holds a Midwifery Annual practicing certificate with no conditions, interim APC does not meet requirements.

6.3 Confident to Leadership Domain

- has completed requirements of Confident Domain
- portfolio reflects requirements of Leadership Domain
- has consistently demonstrated clinical leadership and behaviour

7.0 Progression Flowchart



8.0 Annual Domain Validation

- The annual performance appraisal reflects that the midwife is meeting the requirements of the Domain she is within and the position description requirements.
- The midwife's portfolio provides evidence that her practice is consistent with the stated Domain
- Each year during the performance appraisal the midwife reports on her domain activities and reaffirms her intention to either remain on her stated domain or apply for domain progression.
- Revalidation is recorded on the midwife's employment records.
- If a midwife is unable to demonstrate they are meeting the requirements of the domain they will be offered a 6 month opportunity to meet the requirements after this time they will be transitioned to Competent Domain until the necessary requirements are met.

9.0 Assessment Process

The assessment process for the QLP is a valid, reliable and nationally consistent process. Confidentiality is maintained throughout. DHBs must ensure that sufficient numbers of assessors are trained and appointed to enable portfolios to be assessed within six weeks of submission.

9.1 Assessor skills and expertise

- Has consolidated midwifery knowledge and skills
- Has completed Leadership Domain
- Is committed to the QLP for midwives
- Is respected by peers
- Has credibility within the midwifery profession
- Is committed to their own professional development

9.2 Assessor selection

Midwives seeking appointment as a QLP assessor should apply to the Midwife Leader* with evidence of the skills and experience identified in 9.1 above.

9.3 Assessor training

- Assessors will undertake an approved education programme before undertaking assessments, and will be required to refresh their training every 5 years
- Training is provided by NZCOM, MERAS, or NZQA
- Assessors will undertake the education and assessments within paid working time.

9.4 Portfolio moderation

- **Internal** - There will be an internal moderation process developed. Every fifth application will be moderated by another assessor.
- **External** - This is conducted between DHBs for 10% of reviews and must also be completed within 6 weeks from submission.

** Midwifery Leader means the most senior midwife in the organisation, such as the Director of Midwifery/Midwifery Advisor.*

10.0 Appeals process

- If a midwife has not been successful in their application to progress, the assessor must give a clear indication why the application has been unsuccessful and what corrective actions need to be undertaken.
- An applicant may appeal a decision not to approve progression. The appeals process is sent to all applicants who have been unsuccessful in their application, along with the QLP assessor decision and rationale for that decision.
- A written request for an appeal must be made to the QLP programme co-ordinator within 14 days of the applicant receiving the assessment decision.
- An Appeals Panel comprising an assessor (other than the one that conducted the original assessment) and the Midwifery Leader (or delegate). The Appeals Panel will meet within 21 days of the request for an appeal. Both the midwife and the assessor may present their view to the Appeals Panel.
- The midwife may have a support person and/or union delegate present.
- On completion of the appeal review, a written report and decision will be sent to the midwife applicant within 7 days. A copy of the decision shall be forwarded to the original assessor.
- The decision of the Appeals Panel is final and binding.

** Midwifery Leader means the most senior midwife in the organisation, such as the Director of Midwifery/Midwifery Advisor.*

11.0 Notes

11.1 Position descriptions and Performance appraisal/reviews

It is recommended that all DHBs continue to review and update position descriptions for midwives, incorporating the Midwifery Council scope of practice and competencies.

Alongside that review it is recommended that performance appraisal forms reflect the position descriptions and include a professional development plan. This will enhance and streamline evidential requirements for midwives for both the Council and the DHB processes.

11.2 Midwives employed in two positions – Registered Midwife and Registered Nurse

It is recognised that some DHBs may have employees who are employed in two roles - midwife and nurse. The regulatory authorities now require two distinctly different sets of requirements in order that an annual practising certificate can be held in both of these professions.

DHBs also need to ensure that they articulate clearly in position descriptions why they may require a midwife/nurse to have two APCs when the scopes of practice and requirements are now distinctly different. It is unlikely that an applicant will be applying for both a nursing and a midwifery progression as one of the roles will take precedence within the work environment.

It is recommended that a parallel and seamless process is facilitated for these employees, should they seek recognition on the QLP and the PDRP. This would include the applicant holding a single portfolio for both purposes, but selecting information relevant to each discipline to present for domain application. Some evidence may be relevant for both disciplines but most will be specific to one or the other.

11.3 Formal Review of QLP

A formal review of the QLP Programme shall be undertaken at any time by agreement between Midwifery Leaders representing the DHB's, MERAS, NZNO and NZCOM.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1 - GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Continuity of Care Midwife: means a registered midwife who provides continuity of care throughout the antenatal, labour, birth and postnatal period for a number of individual women.

Core Midwife: means a registered midwife who provides midwifery care for women for the duration of her shift and may liaise with either their Lead Maternity Carer and/or any specialist service.

Domain: The development of midwifery practice is seen in the context of the scope of midwifery practice. The development of practice is likened to the growth of tree rings or circular and expanding knowledge and skill. For the purpose of this document, “domain” describes a depth of engagement in midwifery care. It should not be confused with the use of the term domain in PDRPs for nurses, where it is used to describe a generic area of practice such as communication.

Domain Review: The process of progression from one Domain to the next and the process of annual re-validation of the midwife’s current Domain of practice.

MECA: Multi Employer Collective Agreement

MERAS: Midwifery Representation and Advisory Services

NZCOM: New Zealand College of Midwives

NZNO: New Zealand Nurses Organisation

Midwife: means a person who is on the New Zealand Register of Midwives, holds an annual practising certificate and thereby meets all the requirements of the Midwifery Council of New Zealand recertification program for midwives.

Midwifery Council of New Zealand Recertification Programme: this can be viewed on the Midwifery Council of New Zealand web site- www.midwiferycouncil.org.nz

Midwifery Standards Review: The New Zealand College of Midwives Midwifery Standards Review process is a process of reflection, assessment and education using the framework defined by the New Zealand College of Midwives Philosophy, Code of Ethics, and Standards for Midwifery Practice.

Performance Appraisal/review: This is the annual meeting held between a midwife and her manager to consider her role in relation to her performance against the job description.

Professional Development Plan: A Professional Development plan is developed as a result of the midwife’s participation in the Midwifery Standards Review process and her performance appraisal. It identifies issues which require ongoing or further development. It may include specific goals, long or short term which will be undertaken by the midwife

QLP: Quality and Leadership Programme as required in the MERAS employment agreement

QLP Assessor: A midwife who is employed within the DHB midwifery service who is acknowledged for having consolidated midwifery knowledge and skills, is respected by peers, has credibility within the midwifery profession and is committed to her own professional development.

***in this document the feminine gender is deemed to include the male gender**

APPENDIX 2 - APPLICATION FOR DOMAIN PROGRESSION *(Example)*

Application for Domain Progression

Name of Midwife	Employee Number
Domain applied for: <input type="radio"/> Confident Domain <input type="radio"/> Leadership Domain	
<p>Midwife declaration</p> <p><input type="radio"/> I would like to present my portfolio progression for the above domain. I have discussed my plans to apply with my line manager.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> I confirm that the work contained in my portfolio is my own, and based on my current practice as a midwife.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> I understand my portfolio may be audited for purposes of authentication, and may be submitted for internal or external moderation.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> I understand that if there are any concerns about aspects of my portfolio, these will be discussed with me.</p> <p>Signed: _____ Date: _____</p>	
<p>Portfolio received</p> <p>Signature of Assessor: _____ Date: _____</p> <p><i>You should receive a photocopy of this form to confirm receipt of your portfolio. It is anticipated that your portfolio will be assessed by one of the QLP assessors and a decision will be made within 4 weeks from the above date. If you have any concerns about the process or the decision contact the programme co-ordinator in the first instance.</i></p>	
<p>For Assessor/ Manager use only</p> <p>Portfolio meets the criteria for: <input type="radio"/> Confident practitioner <input type="radio"/> Leadership practitioner</p> <p>This application is supported by: _____</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; width: 100%;"> Name of Assessor Signature of Assessor </div> <p>This application is supported by: _____</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; width: 100%;"> Name of Manager Signature of Manager </div> <p>Domain payments should be commenced from: _____ (date)</p> <p><i>Manager directions to start or increase Domain payments</i></p>	

APPENDIX 3 - LEADERSHIP ACTIVITY REPORT

Leadership Domain Quality or leadership activity report

Name of Midwife	
Employee Number	Date
Name of leadership activity/role:	
Activities undertaken in previous 12 months	
Outcomes/implications for practice	
Plan for next 12 months	
Assistance/resources needed	
Date discussed and reviewed with manager:	
Manager signature:	