



<b>HEALTH PROFESSIONS LICENSING AUTHORITY</b>	
<b>TITLE:</b> Position statement midwives as child birth educators	
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> June 2006	<b>REVIEW DATE:</b> June 2008
<b>BOARD:</b> Nursing and Midwifery Board of the Northern Territory	

### **Preamble**

Childbirth education prepares women and their families for childbirth. Participants in childbirth education classes may be women considering becoming pregnant, pregnant women, their partners, their families including children and grandparents as well as other interested people.

Childbirth education classes may be provided by hospital maternity services, private organisation, educational institutions or individuals as independent childbirth educators.

### **What is a Childbirth Educator?**

Childbirth educators are persons who provide education to prepare people for childbirth. Childbirth educators may have completed a specific course of education that has prepared them for the role, others may not have completed any form of formal qualifications.

Occasionally health professionals, such as midwives, nurses, Aboriginal Health Workers, and physiotherapists may also be involved in the providing of childbirth education classes and or be employed as a childbirth educator.

Childbirth educators recognise that it is always the client who makes decisions, and that it is not the childbirth educator's responsibility to advocate with caregivers on behalf of the client; the childbirth educator may discuss options, to make the decisions that are right for the woman and her family, and to determine whether to accept medical interventions.

The Childbirth educator does not provide clinical care, medical assessment, diagnosis, or advice and is not expected to assist the client in any clinical manner in the actual birth of the baby.

### **Professional Indemnity**

The scope of practise for the midwife and the scope of practise for the childbirth educator are dramatically different.

When practising as a midwife, midwives must ensure that they have a professional indemnity arrangement in place to meet the requirements of the *Health Practitioners Act 2004*.

Midwives may from time to time also be contracted as childbirth educators to provide childbirth education classes by private organisations. In these situations the midwife needs to be very clear that they have been contracted as a childbirth educator and not as a midwife. Practising as a midwife in this setting, without a professional indemnity arrangement could constitute professional misconduct.