

Shared Maternity Care Accreditation and Reaccreditation: General Practitioners and Obstetricians



1. Purpose

The purpose of general practitioners and obstetrician Shared Maternity Care Affiliate accreditation is to:

- Recognise the community-based care provider of maternity care as an integral member of the health care team
- Identify health care providers who are appropriately qualified and meet agreed standards in the provision of care to mutual patients
- Outline the criteria and process to achieve and maintain accreditation as a shared maternity care affiliation as a general practitioner and obstetrician
- Clarify care and communication standards and facilitate communication with affiliates
- Support the quality provision of shared maternity care, continuing professional development and quality care improvements in shared maternity care.

2. Definitions

General Practitioner Liaison Officer and Unit (GPLO and GPLU): provides a link between the hospital and GPs, and encourages and improves communication and care planning, cooperation, efficiency and quality of care between hospitals and general practice in relation to patients and to services provided by the hospital (*Lippmann L, 2006*).

Shared Maternity Care Affiliates (SMCA): a community based General Practitioner, Obstetrician or Midwife who is accredited by the hospital to provide shared maternity care in partnership with the hospital.

Shared Maternity Care: the joint provision of maternity care by an accredited community-based Shared Maternity Care Affiliate and hospital staff. The birth and immediate postnatal care are managed by the hospital. Shared Maternity Care is a maternity care option for women attending The Royal Women's Hospital. Suitability for shared maternity care is addressed in the hospitals Guidelines for Shared Maternity Care Affiliates.

3. Responsibilities

Shared Maternity Care Affiliate/ The Royal Women's Hospital staff:

- To provide high quality care
- To document care on the patient's hand held record
- To undertake appropriate and timely communication and referral between providers.

Responsibilities of the accredited Shared Maternity Care Affiliate:

- To agree and abide by the undertakings as per 5.4.

Responsibilities of The Royal Women's Hospital:

- To provide appropriate guidelines to support high quality care, communication and referral
- To provide appropriate continuing professional development to support shared maternity care
- To undertake quality assurance programs and service development.

Executive Director - (clinical):

- for accreditation and rejection appeals of general practitioners and obstetricians as shared maternity care affiliates.

General Practice Liaison Officer who is a registered medical practitioner:

- for reaccreditation
- recommends accreditation to Executive Director - clinical.

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4. Guideline

4.1 *General Practitioners and Obstetricians initial accreditation*

Accreditation as a Shared Maternity Care Affiliate:

- Is applicable to an individual, not a practice
- Is given for a maximum of 4 years
- Accreditation is obtained until 31/12/2016

There is joint accreditation criteria and a joint process between The Royal Women's Hospital, Mercy Public Hospitals Incorporated, Western Health and Northern Health.

Criteria for accreditation

For successful accreditation as a Shared Maternity Care Affiliate, all the below criteria headings must be met.

Professional requirements

- MBBS or equivalent; and
- Current Unrestricted Medical Registration in Victoria; and
- Current Medical Indemnity/Insurance membership; and
- In the event of conditional registration: this may be acceptable at the discretion of the Head of the General Practice Liaison Unit after establishing the conditions with Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and liaising with the Clinical Director of Maternity Services.

Practice requirements

For General Practitioners initially accredited after 1st January 2014, shared maternity care affiliation is restricted to the provision of shared maternity care from general practices that meet current Practice Accreditation against the Royal Australian College of General practitioners Standards for General Practice (e.g. by Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited or General Practice Australia).

At initial accreditation, the general practitioner seeking accreditation will be required to forward documentation to this effect.

Professional referees

The applicant is required to provide the hospital with the contact details of two professional medical referees, one of whom is a current Shared Maternity Care Affiliate or obstetrician at the Royal Women's Hospital, Mercy Public Hospitals Incorporated, Western Health or Northern Health or obstetrician affiliated with another public hospital. If these are not available, other medical referees may be acceptable at the discretion of the Head of the General Practice Liaison Unit.

Further qualifications and experience

One of the following must be fulfilled:

For Obstetricians:

- Attainment of Fellowship of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (FRANZCOG) or Fellowship of the Royal Australian College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (FRACOG).

For General Practitioners:

- Attainment of Diploma of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (DRANZCOG) or Certificate Satisfactory Competition Training (CSCT) in Women's Health from RANZCOG in the previous 5 years; OR
- Attainment of DRANZCOG or Diploma Royal Australian College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (DRACOG) /or Certificate Satisfactory Competition Training (CSCT) in Women's Health or equivalent

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more than 5 years ago PLUS involvement in the provision of shared maternity care within the previous 5 years; OR

- Significant Experience as an Antenatal Care Provider;

This is decided on an individual basis and must be agreed upon by the designated registered medical practitioners, at the accrediting hospitals (i.e. The Royal Women's Hospital, Mercy Public Hospitals Incorporated, Western Health and Northern Health). At the Royal Women's Hospital, this is the Head of the GP Liaison Unit; OR

- Successful completion of Hospital Antenatal Clinic Attendances and other training.

GPs who do not meet the above postgraduate/experience requirements may apply for accreditation after undertaking training determined by the assessing medical practitioner at one of the four hospitals.

This may consist of:

- Satisfactory completion of pre-attendance questions based on the hospital guidelines for shared maternity care affiliates (guidelines are available on the hospital websites)
- Other training (e.g. The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners CHECK independent learning program for GPs or other activities, attendance at workshops etc)
- Attendance at antenatal clinics at one of the hospitals, with at least one of these sessions undertaken at a primary hospital site
- Satisfactory completion of post-placement and activity questionnaires.

Undertakings

To agree to:

- Review the hospitals guidelines for shared maternity care affiliates
- Observe hospital guidelines in respect of mutual patients, including criteria for hospital review/referral and sharing investigation results and management
- Provide a readily available copy of the accreditation form at the practice for administration and other staff
- Participate in appropriate continuing professional development for the provision of shared maternity care
- Ensure the hospitals have up to date preferred contact information (telephone, facsimile, postal address)
- Ensure the facsimile number given applies to a machine that is in a private location and procedures for handling patient information comply with privacy principles and legislation
- Maintain Medical Registration as current and without conditions and to notify the hospitals if registration is suspended, cancelled or has restrictions imposed
- Maintain Medical Indemnity Insurance at an adequate level of cover for the duration of participation in shared maternity care
- Keep appropriate clinical records and document care in the patient handheld record (e.g. Victorian Maternity Record)
- Make appropriate arrangements for continuing care with an accredited Shared Maternity Care Affiliate or the hospital where the woman is booked for birth when on leave or ill
- Acknowledge the hospitals conduct research activities and quality assurance programs and that Shared Maternity Care Affiliate or patient participation may be requested
- Authorise the hospitals and their General Practice Liaison Units/Shared Care teams to discuss details of provision of shared maternity care, both within the hospitals and between hospitals
- Authorise the hospitals to exchange details about accreditation, including contact details
- Authorise the hospitals to publicly publish and provide women and their families with practice details, and languages spoken

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- Not to provide intrapartum care for women who are booked for maternity care or who undertake shared maternity care with the hospitals
- Understand that Shared Maternity Care Affiliates found not to be adhering to guidelines and acceptable standards of quality of care may have their accreditation status reviewed and revoked
- Confirm that shared maternity care is undertaken whilst working from a practice accredited against the RACGP Standards for general practice, and to inform the hospitals if this is no longer the case[^].

[^]For GPs who first accredit as Shared Maternity Care Affiliates after 1 January 2014.

Process for accreditation

There is a joint accreditation criteria and process for applications for The Royal Women's Hospital, Mercy Public Hospitals Incorporated, Western Health and The Northern Health, whereby the applicant indicates which (up to all four hospitals) he/she wants to apply to.

Application forms can be obtained via the Shared Maternity Care Coordinator at any of the four hospitals or via the hospital websites.

Applications can be submitted to the Shared Maternity Care Coordinator at any of these sites. The application will be processed at the hospital site receiving the application. Processing will include:

- Checking all requirements are met (refer to [section 3.1 Initial Accreditation](#)), and
- Contacting at least one suitable referee to determine suitability of the applicant for shared maternity care affiliation and noting this on the application.

At the Royal Women's hospitals, this will be undertaken by the Head of the GP Liaison Unit, Dr Ines Rio. If a recommendation for approval is made, the application will be forwarded to the Clinical Director of Maternity Services, A/Prof Mark Umstad for ultimate decision.

If it is deemed the application does not fulfil the required criteria, the applicant will be informed.

If an applicant is successful, documentation will be kept at the hospital site approving the application. Other hospital sites that the applicant has also been approved for will be notified of the outcome and for will have access to that information as requested.

At The Royal Women's Hospital, the Clinical Director of Maternity Services, A/Prof Mark Umstad, is responsible for accreditation of general practitioners and obstetricians as shared maternity care affiliates. Appeals may be made to the Executive Director Clinical, Dr Christine Bessell.

4.2 General Practitioners and Obstetricians reaccreditation

Accreditation as a shared maternity care affiliate is for a maximum of 4 years, and there are criteria and processes for reaccreditation each triennium. These criteria and processes differ from initial accreditation.

Reaccreditation as a Shared Maternity Care Affiliate:

- Is applicable to an individual not a practice
- Is given for a maximum of 4 years
- There is a joint reaccreditation criteria and process between The Royal Women's Hospital, Mercy Public Hospitals Incorporated Western Health or Northern Health
- Reaccreditation is next due on 31/12/2016 (and every 3 years forthwith). This is in line with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners triennium.

Criteria for reaccreditation

For successful reaccreditation as a Shared Maternity Care Affiliate General Practitioner or Obstetrician, all the below criteria headings must be met.

Professional requirements

- Current unrestricted Medical Registration in Victoria, and

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- Current Medical Indemnity/Insurance membership.

In the event of conditional registration: this may be acceptable at the discretion of the Head of the General Practice Liaison Unit after establishing the conditions with Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and liaising with the Clinical Director of Maternity Services. Medical Director, Maternity.

Practice requirements

For General Practitioners initially accredited after 1st January 2014, shared maternity care affiliation is restricted to the provision of shared maternity care from general practices that meet current Practice Accreditation against the Royal Australian College of General practitioners Standards for General Practice (e.g. by Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited or General Practice Australia).

At initial accreditation, the general practitioner seeking accreditation will be required to forward documentation to this effect.

Ongoing continuing professional development

One of the following must be fulfilled:

For obstetricians:

- Current Fellowship of RANZCOG

For general practitioners:

- Ten RACGP Group 2 continuing professional development (CPD) points from activities directly related to pregnancy care, pre-pregnancy care, postnatal care or neonatal CPD activities, or
- One supervised hospital Antenatal Clinic session attendance at any of the hospitals within the triennium, or
- Attendance at the Annual Shared Maternity Care Workshop held at one of the four hospitals.

Alternative activities equivalent to ten Group 2 RACGP points may be applied for - this is decided on an individual basis by the registered medical practitioner at one of the four hospitals.

Undertakings

To agree to:

- Review the hospitals guidelines for shared maternity care affiliates
- Observe hospital guidelines in respect of mutual patients, including criteria for hospital review/referral and sharing investigation results and management
- Provide a readily available copy of the re-accreditation form at the practice for administration and other staff
- Participate in appropriate continuing professional development for the provision of shared maternity care
- Ensure the hospitals have up to date preferred contact information (telephone, facsimile, postal address)
- Ensure the facsimile number given applies to a machine that is in a private location and procedures for handling patient information comply with privacy principles and legislation
- Maintain Medical Registration as current and without conditions and to notify the hospitals if registration is suspended, cancelled or has restrictions imposed
- Maintain Medical Indemnity Insurance at an adequate level of cover for the duration of participation in shared maternity care
- Keep appropriate clinical records and document care in the patient handheld record (e.g. Victorian Maternity Record)
- Make appropriate arrangements for continuing care with an accredited Shared Maternity Care Affiliate or the hospital where the woman is booked for birth when on leave or ill

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- Acknowledge the hospitals conduct research activities and quality assurance programs and that Shared Maternity Care Affiliate or patient participation may be requested
- Authorise the hospitals and their General Practice Liaison Units/Shared Care teams to discuss details of provision of shared maternity care, both within the hospitals and between hospitals
- Authorise the hospitals to exchange details about accreditation, including contact details
- Authorise the hospitals to publicly publish and provide women and their families with practice details, and languages spoken
- Not to provide intrapartum care for women who are booked for maternity care or who undertake shared maternity care with the hospitals
- Understand that Shared Maternity Care Affiliates found not to be adhering to guidelines and acceptable standards of quality of care may have their accreditation status reviewed and revoked
- Confirm that shared maternity care is undertaken whilst working from a practice accredited against the RACGP Standards for general practice, and to inform the hospitals if this is no longer the case[^].

[^]For GPs who first accredit as Shared Maternity Care Affiliates after 1 January 2014.

Process for reaccreditation

Reaccreditation occurs every triennium. This is next due on 31/12/2016 (and every 3 years forthwith, consistent with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners triennium).

There is a joint reaccreditation criteria and process for applications for The Royal Women's Hospital, Mercy Public Hospitals Incorporated, Western Health and The Northern Health, whereby the applicant indicates which (up to all four hospitals) he/she applies to.

All GP and obstetrician shared maternity care affiliates will be posted an application form to their nominated address. If they do not return a completed form that fulfils the reaccreditation criteria, they will receive at least one reminder letter by post. If they have not returned an application that fulfils the reaccreditation criteria by 31st December of the triennium, they will receive a letter that their shared maternity care affiliation with the hospitals will be ceased and their name is to be removed from the shared maternity care affiliate lists of all four hospitals. Shared maternity care affiliates who have not fulfilled requirements by 1st March the following year will then lose their accreditation as a shared maternity care affiliate. Individual GPs who are awaiting the fulfilment of specific criteria may have this extended by the Head of the GP Liaison Unit for a limited time, at the discretion of the Head of the GP Liaison Unit. Once shared maternity care affiliate affiliation has ceased, applicants will need to apply for accreditation (refer to section [3.1 Initial Accreditation](#)).

Applications will need to be submitted at the hospital designated for the receipt of reaccreditation applications, but may be processed at any of the four hospital sites. Processing will include checking all requirements are met by the designated medical practitioner of the hospital (refer to section [3.2 Reaccreditation](#)).

At the Royal Women's hospitals, this will be undertaken by the Head of the GP Liaison Unit, Dr Ines Rio, who is then responsible for approving or declining the application, with the applicant being informed of the outcome.

If an applicant is successful, documentation will be kept at the hospital site approving the application. Other hospital sites that the applicant has also been approved for will be notified of the outcome and for will have access to that information as requested.

Appeals may be made to the Clinical Director of Maternity Services, A/Prof Mark Umstad.

5. Evaluation, monitoring and reporting of compliance to this guideline

At the time of reaccreditation a survey is posted to shared maternity care affiliates that covers the process and criteria of reaccreditation, reasons why shared maternity care affiliates do not seek reaccreditation.

Every three years medical practitioners from the 4 General Practice Liaison Units, the Obstetric heads of the four hospitals and GP representatives come together to review and decide on accreditation and reaccreditation criteria for the next triennium.

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The medical practitioners from the four hospitals meet at least twice a year, as the 'Shared Maternity Care Collaborative' with standing agenda items of accreditation and reaccreditation of shared maternity care affiliate GPs and obstetricians.

6. References

1. Guidelines for Shared Maternity Care Affiliates, Mercy Hospital for Women, The Royal Women's Hospital, Western Health, November 2010. Published by The Royal Women's Hospital, Mercy Hospital for Women, Northern Health and Western Health, Melbourne, Victoria. (Planned update 2014).
2. Memorandum of Understanding between, Mercy Public Hospitals Incorporated, Northern Health, The Royal Women's Hospital and Western Health; May 2014.
3. Lippmann L, The Role & Achievements of Victorian Public Sector GP Liaison Officers, Australian Government Primary Health Care Research Evaluation Development (PHCRED) Strategy Jan 2006, p iii.

7. Legislation related to this guideline

Not applicable.

8. Appendices

Not applicable.

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