

Ottawa Valley Doulas Mandate and Standards

1. Scope

- A. Services Rendered - The doula accompanies the woman in labor, provides emotional and physical support, suggests comfort measures, and provides support and suggestions for the partner. Whenever possible, the doula provides pre- and post-partum emotional support, including explanation and discussion of practices and procedures, and assistance in acquiring the knowledge necessary to make informed decisions about her care. Additionally, as doulas do not “prescribe” treatment, any suggestions or information provided within the role of the doula must be done with the stipulation that the doula advises her client to check with her primary care provider before using any implementation.
- B. Limits to Practice - OVD Standards apply to emotional, physical and informational support only. The OVD member does not perform clinical or medical tasks, such as taking blood pressure or temperature, fetal heart tone checks, vaginal examinations or postpartum clinical care. The OVD member will not diagnose or treat in any modality.
 - i. If the doula has qualifications in alternative or complementary modalities (such as aromatherapy, childbirth education, massage therapy, placenta encapsulation, etc.), she must make it very clear to her clients and others that those modalities are an additional service, outside of the doula’s scope of practice.
 - ii. A healthcare provider (such as a nurse, midwife, chiropractor, etc.) may not refer to herself as a doula while providing services outside of a doula’s scope of practice.
 - iii. Conversely, if a health care, alternative care or complementary care professional chooses to limit her services to those provided by doulas, it is acceptable according to OVD’s Standards of Practice for her to describe herself as a doula.

- C. Advocacy - The doula advocates for the client's wishes as expressed in her birth plan, in prenatal conversations, and during the labour and birthing process, by encouraging her client to ask questions of her care provider and to express her preferences and concerns. The doula helps the mother incorporate changes in plans if and when the need arises, and enhances the communication between client and care provider. Clients and doulas must recognize that the advocacy role does not include the doula speaking instead of the client or making decisions for the client. The advocacy role is best described as support, information, mediation or negotiation.

2. Continuity of Care

- A. The doula should make back-up arrangements with another doula to ensure services to the client if the doula is unable to attend the birth. Should any doula feel a need to discontinue service to an established client, it is the doula's responsibility to notify the client in writing and arrange for a replacement, if the client so desires. This may be accomplished by:
 - Introducing the client to the backup doula.
 - Suggesting that another member of OVD or another doula may be more appropriate for the situation.
 - Following up with the client or backup doula to make sure the client's needs are being met.

3. Active in the Capital Region

The doula:

- - Must be operating as an active and professional doula in the Ottawa and surrounding areas.
- - Must have signed the OVD Code of Ethics and OVD Standards of Practice and agree to abide by the directives stated.
- - Pay the yearly membership dues.

Mandate:

As an association we hope to open line of communication and improve our clients experiences within the hospital setting in the capital region. We want to form positive relationships with birth units and staff so that everyones experience can be positive.

- Attend at least one meeting per year (in person or virtually)
- Brainstorm ways we can make positive change as a group
- Attend round/info session/workshops/groups with local hospitals
- Provide feedback on experiences (positive and otherwise)

Name (please sign)

Date