

Doula Association of Edmonton

Standards of Practice

I. Scope of Practice

A. **Services Rendered.** The doula accompanies the woman in labour, provides emotional and physical support, suggests comfort measures, and provides support and suggestions for the partner. Whenever possible, the doula provides pre and postpartum emotional support, including explanation and discussion of practices and procedures, as needed.

B. **Limits to Practice.** The doula does not perform clinical or medical tasks such as taking blood pressure or temperature, fetal heart tone checks, vaginal examinations, or postpartum clinical care. DAE Standards of Practice apply to emotional and physical support only. Doulas who are also health care professionals may provide these services within the scope and standards of their profession.

C. **Advocacy.** The doula advocates for the client's wishes as expressed in her birth plan, in prenatal conversations, and intrapartum discussion. She helps the mother incorporate changes in plans if and when the need arises, and enhances communication between client and caregiver. 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, and mediation or negotiation.

D. **Referrals.** For client needs beyond the scope of the doula's training, referrals are made to appropriate resources.

II. Continuity of Care

The doula should make back-up arrangements with another doula to ensure services to the client if the doula is sick or unable to be reached. 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:

- A. Introducing the client to the doula's back-up.
- B. Contacting the DAE Referral Coordinator for names of other doulas in the area.
- C. Following up with the client or back-up doula to ensure that the client's needs were met.

III. Training

Doulas who have successfully completed the Application for inclusion on the DAE Referral List will have completed the following minimum training requirements: completion of a recognized doula training course which consists of at least fourteen hours of instruction and completion of a narrative statement which outlines their thoughts on the value and purpose of labour support and their personal goal as a doula.

III. Record Keeping

A. **Documentation.** The doula maintains clear and accurate records of each client encounter and birth.