Believe Midwifery Services, LLC

Responsibilities of the Midwife’s Birth Assistant

Midwifery Birth Assistants are responsible for assisting the nurse-midwife in creating a safe and peaceful birthing environment, while respecting the midwifery model of care. The midwifery assistant’s role consists of clinical skill within the office and client’s home, including teaching, counseling, and advocacy efforts. Midwifery assistants are responsible to the immediate nurse-midwife, who is responsible to the Senior Midwife and Administrative Director.

Hierarchy

The Midwife’s Birth Assistant is responsible to the immediate nurse-midwife within each home birth. The Midwife’s Office Assistant direct supervisor is the Midwifery Assistant Liaison.

The Midwife’s Office Assistant must perform only those services for which they are qualified and capable, and refer to appropriate specialists when work is not within their scope of practice or not in the client’s best interest.

Minimum Qualifications

1. Graduation from college with a minimum of an associates degree in any healthcare discipline;

2. Attendance at each of the childbirth education classes and the women’s health class offered by Believe Midwifery Services, LLC;

3. Successful completion of provider level CPR for the adult and child;

4. Successful completion of NRP taught by Dr. Lane;

5. Attendance at the Believe Midwifery Midwifery Birth Assistant workshop;

6. Experience within the midwifery-model-of-care, either as clinical staff or consumer;

7. Efficient at obtaining vital signs on mother and neonate, including pulse oximetry;

8. Efficient at initiating and obtaining fetal heart tone assessments, both via doppler and external fetal monitor;

9. Self-disciplined, energetic, passionate, innovative, and humble with a servant’s heart;

10. Team player who can follow a system and protocol to achieve a common goal;

11. Highly organized and well-developed oral and written communication skills;

12. Proficiency in communication with the clinical team via Trello;

13. Proficiency with electronic health records;

14. Demonstrates sound judgment, decision-making and problem-solving skills;

15. Able to maintain confidentiality with all aspects of information in accordance with practice, State and Federal regulations; and

16. Confidence to communicate and outreach to other community health care organizations and personnel.

Employment Requirements
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17. Physical exam with appropriate immunizations and/or titers;

18. References verified;

19. Social media profiles reviewed for professionalism;

20. Confidentiality agreement signed;

21. Conflict of interest signed;

22. Job Description signed;

23. Criminal background check approved by Practice Administrator if unlicensed;

24. Basic service ability for preparing postpartum meals, laundry, and cleaning birthing environment;

25. Physical strength for carrying midwifery equipment up or down a flight of stairs and/or assisting the pregnant mother in moving as necessary (approximately 50 pounds);

26. Physical ability to bend at the waist and accommodate the client and clinician while assisting in clinical care;

27. Basic computer literacy, including the ability to use basic desktop applications and electronic communication;

28. Ability to use IT to support clinical and administrative processes, which presumes information literacy to support evidence-based practice;

29. Ability access data and perform documentation via computerized patient records;

30. Ability to support patient safety initiatives via the use of IT;

31. Successful completion of a HIPAA training course and passing of competency testing;

32. Successful completion of an OSHA training course;

33. Successful completion of all training modules outlined on our staff website and within the Policy & Procedure manual;

34. Must believe whole heartedly in the midwifery model-of-care, the safety of homebirth and the importance of breastfeeding; and

35. Must have great respect for all medical modalities with a desire to create a safe infrastructure of care throughout the healthcare system.

Character

Loyalty, dependability, confidentiality, responsibility, integrity, and maturity levels of the midwifery assistant are vital. The assistant must respectfully communicate with the midwifery team at all times, and all collaborating healthcare providers. A servant’s heart is necessary, as the midwifery assistant will attend to not only the needs of the mother and newborn, but also collaborate with each member of the midwifery team.

Required Skills

The midwifery assistant’s primary focus is to assist the nurse-midwife. The nurse-midwife works in partnership with the client, as the primary caregiver, and her assistant strives to ease the nurse-midwife’s efforts. The assistant
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therefore, must be humble in taking direction from the nurse-midwife and she must be mindful of the multitude of tasks that are always in need of her attention with requiring on-going direction.

A midwife’s assistant should have competent technical skills with appropriate clinical experience, which is ultimately determined mutually by the nurse-midwives and the Midwifery Assistant Liaison. Ideally, the person should be very comfortable in the birthing environment and in supporting the laboring woman. She should also have a personality that is complementary to the midwife’s and birth team, be empathetic with laboring woman, and be able to anticipate the woman’s emotional and physical needs. The assistant’s belief in the ability of the woman to birth in a natural manner is not only empowering to the mother, but a basic component of Believe Midwifery Services, LLC philosophy.

These skills are detailed within the Midwifery Assistant Workshop provided by Believe Midwifery Services, LLC and evidence of competency is documented within the skills checklist maintained within each employee’s file. Skills can be further enhanced through mock exercises provided at each staff meeting and through mentorship with a more experienced assistant and/or primary midwife.

Minimum clinical duties of the midwifery office assistant includes:

1. Performing and recording maternal and newborn vital signs;
2. Utilizing fetal Doppler to assist with obtaining fetal heart tone rate and the audible acceleration test;
3. Palpating uterine contractions;
4. Drawing up injectable medications for administration;
5. Administering herbal tinctures and homeopathic remedies per nurse-midwife’s order;
6. Labor support, providing comfort needs;
7. Assisting the midwife with suturing, handling of sterile equipment;
8. Assigning APGARS;
9. Care and coordination of placenta;
10. Obtaining weights/measurements;
11. Use of bulb syringe, DeLee, Res-Q-Vac;
12. Use of Bambu bag and T-piece resuscitator;
13. Ability to administer oxygen to mother and newborn;
14. Assisting mother to the bathroom and providing perineal care;
15. Offering the 24-hour phone call;
16. Administration of intramuscular, subcutaneous, vaginal, rectal and topical medications;
17. Providing basic education to parents (enforcing information provided within the childbirth education curriculum of Believe Midwifery Services, LLC);
18. Preparing cord blood as ordered by nurse-midwife, as well as creating requisition and instructions for parents to deliver to local laboratory;

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19. Supporting skin-to-skin contact;

20. Assisting with optimal latch;

21. Assessing resources and social needs of family;

22. Performing the newborn metabolic screening, hearing screening, and pulse oximetry;

23. Professional accountability in following clinical practice guidelines as they apply to the midwife’s office assistant role;

24. Demonstrated ability to coordinate within a busy office during clinic days, including following the task list without direction and warmly responding to clients in person and on the phone;

25. Thoroughly, accurately and professionally documents any and all client care and correspondence, as well as scribes for the clinician during consultations; and

26. Willingness to accept any other responsibility requested of your associates and/or the midwives.

Assisting the Nurse-Midwife within each homebirth setting includes:

27. Preparing and maintaining a safe homebirth environment;

28. Gathering data and assessing clients as appropriate to training, throughout labor and birth process;

29. Reviewing the Reminder List for any specific responsibilities associated with homebirth, performing those within the midwifery assistant’s scope or gathering necessary supplies and equipment for nurse-midwife to do so;

30. Review problem and medication list early in labor management, assuring clinical team is all coordinating care congruently;

31. Assign tasks within client’s chart as ordered by the nurse-midwife and follow-up on those already assigned;

32. Assist client completion of documentation, including birth certificate data; and

33. Scribing for nurse-midwife within specified area of client’s healthcare record.

Summary of Administrative Duties:

34. Assist the client in scheduling follow-up visit with nurse-midwife no sooner than 48 hours following birth and prior to 72 hours;

35. Stock midwife’s bags with all necessary equipment, including both clinical and otherwise;

36. Maintain database of expiration dates of all clinical supplies and equipment, including scheduled equipment maintenance as appropriate;

37. Assist the client in scheduling appointments and making payments as necessary, including accepting payments for laboratory testing as performed during the clinical visit.

As clinical skill develops, and higher levels of academic education and licensure are earned, the Midwifery Birth Assistant gains greater autonomy in her role. Competency in all skills detailed above are required as a minimum standard for the midwifery assistant. Those competencies below are those with which Believe Midwifery Services, LLC requires for the advancement in clinical role:
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38. Nursing license in good standing, Paramedic credentialing, or CDEM credentialing in good standing with criminal history background check approved by Midwifery Assistant Liaison;

39. Proficiency with fetoscope and/or pinard horn; sterile technique, phlebotomy, IV placement, cervical exams, fundal massage, assessing postpartum bleeding, newborn metabolic screening, newborn exams (per license), postpartum perineal assessments, and audible acceleration testing (per license), proving postpartum home visits;

40. Providing assessments of fetal well-being, neonates and maternal status, including head-to-toe assessments;

41. Skilled and competent with handling triage phone calls (per license), and both antepartum and postpartum/newborn home visits (per license);

42. Certification as a Lactation Counselor or completion of 20 Hours of Breastfeeding Education, ultimately successfully earning international certification as a Lactation Consultant;

43. Directing, delegating and supervising less skilled healthcare professionals; and

44. Willingness to accept any other responsibility requested by associates and/or nurse-midwives.

Professional Equipment

Healthcare providers increase their proficiency when their tools are familiar; therefore, it is a professional standard to purchase your own stethoscope. However, all other items are provided for use by Believe Midwifery Services, LLC while employed for our practice, and should be returned upon termination. These may include, but are not limited to:

1. An adult stethoscope;
2. A neonatal stethoscope;
3. A sphygmomanometer, both adult and large adult;
4. Clean gloves;
5. Black pen;
6. Spare set of clean medical scrubs with Believe Midwifery logo;
7. Flashlight;
8. Neonatal amбу for resuscitative efforts;
9. Adult mask for resuscitative efforts;
10. Fetal doppler;
11. Birth kit in the event of impending birth prior to the arrival of the nurse-midwife.

Midwifery Assistants with advanced training will have greater clinical responsibility and therefore, may be provided additional equipment and supplies, such as:

12. Umbilical clamp remover;
13. Neonatal scale;

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14. Sterile lubricant;

15. Emergency medications, including oxygen;

16. Pulse oximetry; and

17. Phlebotomy supplies for the neonatal and mother.

Any supplies provided by Believe Midwifery Services, LLC and not returned to the practice upon termination will be charged to the employee for cost of replacement.

Servant’s Heart

It is important for the Midwife’s Office Assistant to have compassion and empathy for the midwife. The assistant needs to be open and honest in her communications to maintain a trusting relationship with the midwifery team, administrative director and client. Assistants must work well with each other avoiding conflict that could compromise the safety or alter the peaceful environment of our midwifery clients. As a servant, you may be responsible for:

1. Preparing, cooking, and serving family (mother and father) with meals, as well as the birthing team;

2. Cleaning, organizing, and restocking birth equipment;

3. Assisting with stain removal in laundry, carpet and mattress;

4. Emptying tub and/or reminding parents to clean, without disassembly, for pick-up;

5. Ensuring stock is maintained and working order of clinical equipment;

6. Care of equipment, including scheduling required maintenance; and

7. And any other task the midwife or birth team may ask of you.

Emergency Management

The midwife’s assistant must remain calm and effectively perform necessary skills needed in any situation. Words and actions in a crisis situation will leave an indelible imprint. What you say and how you say it will remain with the client and her family for life. The nurse--midwife shall have the responsibility of communicating sensitive information. Skills the midwife’s assistant must continually sharpen for appropriate emergency management include:

1. Basic NRP skills such as stimulating and drying infant, setting up and administering oxygen, (IV via Bambu and T-piece, and chest compressions;

2. Drawing up and administering emergency medications, including preparing IV solutions;

3. Obtaining supplies per request of nurse-midwife from midwifery bags, and providing them as appropriate for use to the nurse-midwife;

4. Recognition of emergency scariness and awareness of basic care procedures;

5. Maintaining accurate and timely documentation;

6. Notifying emergency team for transfer; and

7. Any other task the nurse-midwife or birth team may ask of you.
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Believe Midwifery Services, LLC will offer periodic peer review sessions and skill review workshops that each midwifery assistant actively employed with Believe Midwifery Services, LLC are expected to attend.

Professionalism

High standards are expected regarding professionalism. Your appearance, communication skills, and loyalty to homebirth, midwifery, and the practice are paramount. The nurse-midwife is unable to fulfill the role of the midwife assistant; therefore, your absence may require the client be transferred to the nearest hospital. Clearly this would be detrimental to both the family and the practice. It is vital each midwifery assistant give this responsibility serious consideration. Each midwifery assistant should discuss with her partner and children the responsibility required of them.

It is important for the Midwife’s Office Assistant to understand that the client and the nurse-midwife have built a relationship throughout the pregnancy. A great deal of discussion has occurred between the nurse-midwife and the client regarding the type of care and choices best for their individual birth. The midwifery assistant must respect these decisions.

1. Midwifery assistants are expected to respect all clients regardless of their age, gender, race, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status, body type, political affiliation, state of health and personal habits.

2. Midwifery assistants are required to wear clean polos with Believe Midwifery Services, LLC logo embroidered, provided by the practice. Kakis or dark jeans are required with no tears or fraying at the hem. Light colored jeans are not permitted.

3. Name tags are provided and are asked to be worn while representing Believe Midwifery Services, LLC at professional meetings, workshops, conventions, and/or seminars.

4. Outside shoes should not be worn in the client’s home. Either clean socks or shoe covers are expected to be worn at all times. Feet should never be bare within the client’s home.

5. If ever assisting the nurse-midwife with a home visit, outside shoes should not be worn in the client’s home. Either clean socks or shoe covers are expected to be worn at all times. Feet should never be bare within the client’s home.

6. Nails should be clean and trimmed. No false fingernails or large rings with stones that may scratch clients and their newborn are permitted.

7. Hygiene is exceptionally important as not only does your appearance make a strong impression about our profession and homebirth, but it impacts the credibility of the practice and the safety of our care. Pregnant and birthing mothers have hyper-sensitive olfactory senses. Unpleasant odors can disrupt their ability to relax in their birthing event. This is true too of the nurse-midwife. Her awareness of your hygiene will cause her distraction that could jeopardize optimal care to the birthing family.

8. Hair should clean and pulled back to prevent contamination of the sterile field.

9. Any cuts, wounds, or lesions the midwifery assistant may have should be covered. If open areas are on the hands and arms, participation in waterbirth is not permitted.

10. Business casual is required at all office and home visits (only dark jeans without strains or fraying hem allowed, all other denim is too casual for the business environment).

11. Midwifery assistants are required to bring their birth bag to each birth with sufficient supplies to perform their job;

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12. Team work is expected at all times, including covering call times for each other when in need, being flexible with your schedule and realizing at some point you will have to take a shift that wasn't desired (holidays and weekends) to meet the needs of the practice.

13. Six twenty-four hour call shifts each calendar month is required by each Midwifery Assistant.

14. Complete understanding and adherence to all of the clinical practice guidelines, and the policy and procedure manual, is the responsibility of each midwife assistant.

15. Contact information should remain up-to-date at all times.

16. Transportation must be secured at all times the assistant is on-call, including a sufficient amount of gas required to attend a speedy birth.

17. Midwifery assistants are expected to remain within a two hour radius of client's 37 weeks and beyond.

18. If the midwifery assistant becomes ill, she must arrange for another assistant to cover her shift during her illness. It is not acceptable to call the nurse-midwife to inform her you are unavailable.

19. Each assistant’s participation within the staff communication group, Trello, is expected at least weekly.

20. Each assistant is also expected to review the staff webpage weekly to stay abreast of current practice happenings.

21. It is also the employee’s responsibility to review the staff privilege page weekly to assure they are up-to-date with any practice changes, and are familiar with the site for reference while completing their job tasks.

The Midwifery Birth Assistant’s role with Believe Midwifery Services, LLC is important. Each valued immensely. The service the assistant provides each family may often go unrecognized, as their gratitude supersedes their ability to thank-you.

If at any time the midwifery assistant becomes concerned about the care provided by any one of the clinicians, your responsibility would be to respectfully and discreetly ask the nurse-midwife if you can talk to her in private. Share your concerns in a non-threatening way. Offer rationale and your suggestions. If your concerns are not relieved, feel free to make immediately aware the Senior Midwife. If in fact, your concern is with the Senior Midwife and speaking to her directly did not resolve your concern, notify an alternative nurse-midwife. However, at all times, no matter the circumstances, you are expected to maintain the utmost of respect for each and every staff member and continue to encourage confidence in our care to the family wherever possible. The nurse-midwife’s education and decision making skills far exceeds those of the support staff. It is not her responsibility to always rationalize her decisions to her support team.

Immunizations

The Centers for Disease Control recommends the following vaccinations for healthcare personnel. While we respect your convictions regarding immunizations, your potential to expose our pregnant clientele is a liability to the practice. Therefore, a history of chickenpox as evidence by titer or the varicella vaccination is required. The full hepatitis B series is highly recommended, although a waiver is available if the employee refuses. Evidence of immunity to MMR is required, specifically because Rubella can cause fetal anomalies if an infected medical provider were to expose the pregnant mother. And finally, the annual influenza vaccine is NOT required by our practice, but recommended by the Centers for Disease Control as healthcare workers are in fact the key cause of influenza outbreaks among patients.

Reimbursement
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The midwifery assistant is paid per the grid, based on experience, education and credentialing. No assistant will be paid for the job, until all work is completed, including documentation.

Advocacy work and annual celebration picnic are offered as a volunteer and greatly appreciated by the Administrative Director, Senior Midwife and our clientele. In-service training, organizational meetings, or additional mentorship with the Supervisor, the Practice Administrator or other staff members in effort to enhance one's skills in any specific area related to your professional role will be provided at no additional charge to you if your learning would benefit Believe Midwifery Services, LLC. Examples of such training include: hearing screen administration, sterile water papule administration, breastfeeding counseling, use of TENS unit, rain drop therapy, childbirth education, mock codes, vaginal breech birth workshops, NRP practice, use of herbs and oils, etc.

Staff meetings specific to practice administration or company procedure, or orientation specific to a new role within the clinic is paid at an hourly rate determined by the Administrative Director.

Physical Demands

This role requires sitting and standing associated with a normal office environment, as well as strength and endurance to carry heavy clinical equipment. Manual dexterity, perceiving attributes of objects by means of skin receptors, fingers and hands is required. Transportation and lifting of both mom and baby, usually by hand, arm or shoulder is necessary. Moving on foot on uneven surfaces and raising or lowering an object approximately 25-50 pounds may be required, even carrying such load up a flight of stairs. Perceiving the nature of sounds by ear and expressing self though the spoken word is vital. Bending at the waist to obtain fetal heart tones on a laboring woman within the spa, or in any other position she may assume, or offering physical support during labor such as consistent back massage is a requirement of this job position. This description is intended to provide only basic guidelines for meeting job requirements. Responsibilities, skills and working conditions may change as needs evolve.

Proprietary Information and Non-Disclosure

The midwifery assistant shall not use to their own advantage or the advantage of any other person, business or entity, except as specifically provided in this job description, either during their association or at any time thereafter, any information gained for or from business, files, and/or records of Believe Midwifery Services, LLC. The midwife’s assistant shall maintain all confidential information disclosed to him or her hereunder by Believe Midwifery Services, LLC in strict confidence. The midwifery assistant agrees that all documents, drawings and writings of any kind provided to him or her by Believe Midwifery Services, LLC are the sole property of Believe Midwifery Services, LLC. The midwife’s assistant acknowledges that such information is proprietary, and that in the event of an unauthorized disclosure and/or use of such information, significant damages may be incurred or suffered by Believe Midwifery Services, LLC. The midwifery assistant will destroy all copies of the confidential information once it is no longer required by them to perform work for Believe Midwifery Services, LLC, or as directed by Believe Midwifery Services, LLC.

Non-Compete

The midwifery assistant shall not now or for three years following termination, become employed by or contracted by any of Believe Midwifery Services, LLC’s direct out-of-hospital competitors, including other nurse-midwifery birth center and/or homebirth practices within the counties we serve, and each county surrounding. The midwife’s assistant will not establish, own, organize, or manage their own women’s health practice within any county the practice has served clients, or within their surrounding counties. Written permission by the Administrative Director may be granted on an individual basis which will make null and void the non-compete clause. The midwifery assistant shall not compete with our essential oil, sling, cloth diapering, or product sales otherwise while employed for Believe Midwifery Services, LLC. The midwifery assistant shall not teach educational classes that directly compete with classes provided by Believe Midwifery Services, LLC or the Red Raspberry Boutique, LLC.

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Conflict of Interest

Believe Midwifery Services, LLC’s mission is one that promotes, supports and protects the midwifery model of care, women’s health, breastfeeding, holistic healthcare, and respectful parenting. Believe Midwifery Services, LLC is also a faith-based practice that upholds to the best of its ability teachings from the Holy Bible. Employment by or active participation in agencies, organizations, or corporations that directly oppose such philosophy and demonstrate to impact the services provided by Believe Midwifery Services, LLC would be a direct conflict of interest to your position here at Believe Midwifery Services, LLC and are strictly prohibited. This is extended to social media including for example, Facebook, Pintrest, blogging, listservs, etc.

Quality Review

The midwife’s assistant is an interdependent member of the midwifery team. Care management is expected to be carried through completion with substantial independence, yet the midwifery assistant remains the direct responsibility of the nurse-midwife. The midwifery assistant shall share a self-evaluation with one of the office managers at their annual anniversary date. That same nurse-midwife or office manager will provide a written and/or verbal evaluation regarding the assistant’s positive attributes, along with any beneficial critique. The nurse-midwife will also respectfully request any comments or suggestions for improvement regarding the practice management of Believe Midwifery Services, LLC.

Termination

Believe Midwifery Services, LLC has the right to terminate employment, at-will, without notice.

Reasons for Termination for Gross Misconduct Includes:

1. Not being available while on-call with prior knowledge of competing commitments is grounds for immediate termination.

2. Drugs or alcohol so that the assistant is unable to provide immediate and safe clinical judgement while on-call or working within the office is grounds for immediate termination.

3. Refusing to care for any one particular client because you disagree with the nurse-midwife’s care management (abandonment) is grounds for termination.

4. Speaking disrespectfully to associates or clients at any time is grounds for immediate termination.

In the event of termination related to anyone of the above scenarios, or circumstances with equal or greater severity, the Administrative Director is at liberty to report such negligence to the Indiana State Board of Nursing. At no time will the Administrative Director tolerate endangerment to the clientele of Believe Midwifery Services, LLC, and at no time will she tolerate behavior that reflects poorly on our profession.

It is otherwise expected that the midwife’s assistant will fulfill each agreed upon commitment stated within the aforementioned job description. The Administrative Director respects greatly that each assistant’s commitment to their profession, particularly as mothers, is seasonal. Some seasons of life we are able to commit more fully and at other times, less responsibility is necessary. However, if the assistant is in need of decreased commitment or a leave of absence, it is paramount that the midwifery assistant manage this scenario with great integrity and professionalism, respecting the limited resources of the practice and vital role the assistant provides. Please offer as much advance notice as possible and trust that circumstances beyond your control are appreciated by the Administrative Director; however, abrupt abandonment otherwise will eliminate any possibility of future employment or positive recommendation.
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Finally, upon termination by either party, the assistant will be required to return all equipment owned by Believe Midwifery Services, LLC without damage or neglect.

I agree to the terms of this job description and accept the responsibilities of the midwifery assistant role.