



## **Doula Practice Standards for Morris Hospital**

### **Doulas for Labor and Birth Support**

The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG) and Morris Hospital Support the use of doulas and recognize doulas as care team partners. Morris Hospital has a responsibility to ensure safe, patient-centered, quality care for our patients as well as a collaborative delivery environment for the care team. Since the doula is working for the patient and not an employee of Morris Hospital, this document aims to guide collaboration between the doula communities and clinical teams.

### **Doula's Scope of Practice at Morris Hospital**

Morris Hospital gladly welcomes doulas who have a service agreement with individuals admitted to Family Birthing Suites to attend and support the labor and birth experience. Doulas provide an invaluable service by:

- Providing continuous emotional, physical, and informational support to the patient
- Facilitating communication between the patient and the clinical team about physical and psychosocial needs to help optimize holistic care.
- Encouraging breathing exercises and other calming techniques to optimize coping.
- Adhering to hospital expectations for use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and hand hygiene.
- Guiding and supporting patient's family and loved ones.
- Remaining with the patient throughout the delivery and during the postpartum period (based on service agreement that has been established between the doula and the patient, and pursuant to the clinical team's direction).
- Assisting with patient self-care needs such as intrapartum position changes or breastfeeding after consulting and collaborating with the clinical team.
- Adhere to patient confidentiality in accordance to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations.

- Supporting patients undergoing a cesarean delivery: An awake patient may have one support person present in the Operating Room (OR) and/or Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). A doula may serve as the one support person if so desired by the patient. The doula will be expected to honor the requests of the medical team if asked to wait outside of treatment areas to facilitate patient care.
- Leave the Family Birthing Suites patient's care area without delay if instructed by the clinical team.

While doulas have much to contribute to the labor, delivery, and postpartum experience, we expect that doulas will not:

- Provide medical care to the Family Birthing Suites patient. Examples of medical care include: medication administration to patient or newborn - including herbal preparations or supplements; provide oxygen; perform cervical exams; push with laboring patients without direct supervision from clinical team; remove or replace fetal or uterine monitoring devices; start, stop, or silence intravenous pumps.
- Make medical decisions for the patient.
- Diagnose medical conditions.
- Initiate or change the plan of medical care.
- Offer medical advice to the healthcare staff or intervene in the event of an emergency.
- Contradict health care provider counseling or recommendations; we expect doulas to support our patients in a way that does not contradict medical advice.

As is the case for all support persons at Morris Hospital, doulas are not permitted to:

- Be present during placement of regional analgesia/anesthesia (e.g. epidural or spinal placement)
- Be present in the Operating Room during:
  - Placement of Spinal anesthesia for Cesarean Sections (C-sections)
  - Stat C-sections and C-sections requiring general anesthesia
  - Postpartum hemorrhage cases requiring a move to the Operating Room
  - Twin delivery that transitions into C-section under general anesthesia; if C-section is under regional anesthesia, refer to above parameters for doula as a support person in the OR.

## **Process**

Upon arrival to Morris Hospital, the doula must:

- Sign in at the front desk to receive a badge identifying themselves as the Family Birthing Suites patient's doula.  
The badge must be worn at all times when in the hospital. A new badge must be obtained at each visit.
- Upon arrival to Family Birthing Suites: check in as a doula with staff.
- Doulas may be asked to provide written acknowledgement of their certification upon the hospital's request.

Failure to comply with the practice standards may result in removal from the Family Birthing Suites.

For additional questions, contact Family Birthing Suites at 815-942-3012.