



Midwifery Council of New Brunswick

**Conseil de l'Ordre des sages-femmes
du Nouveau-Brunswick**

Guidelines: Chairperson – Role and Responsibilities

As mandated by the *Midwifery Act s. 10*, along with the MCNB's vision and mission "to serve the public interest by regulating and advancing safe, professional midwifery care throughout the province of New Brunswick", the Council or Committee Chair is responsible for providing leadership and strategic direction. The Chairperson encourages full participation of members at meetings and ensures that all relevant matters are discussed so that effective decisions are made and carried out in a timely manner.

The Chair of Council works closely with the Executive Director to track relevant issues, put together meeting agendas and plan meetings which the Chair facilitates.

A committee Chair is usually, but not always, a member of the Council, and reports on the committee's activities and presents committee proposals at Council meetings. If the Chair is not a Council member, the Chair may be asked to join a meeting for the section of the agenda that relates to the committee's business. This can be done by teleconference.

The Executive Director drafts the Annual report based on the minutes and/or input from the Chair of Council and Committee Chairs.

Chair Responsibilities before a Council, Committee and Annual General Meeting:

- The Chair reviews the minutes of the previous meeting, related task lists, reports and correspondence, and works with the Executive Director to create an agenda for the next meeting.
- As a part of reviewing task lists and/or the minutes of the previous meeting, the Chair reviews decision and action items and works with the Executive Director to ensure appropriate follow-up before the next meeting.
- Each year the Chair provides a report for the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Chair Responsibilities during a Council, Committee and Annual General Meeting:

- The Chair is available for all Council and committee meetings. If the Chair is a midwife, they will make every effort to be off call to attend meetings. If unavailable, the chair will find another committee member to chair that meeting.
- The Chair facilitates all committee meetings, including:
 - Ensure a quorum (more than 50% of members is present for decision-making and check that everyone is available for the full scheduled time;
 - Review the agenda for the meeting with the members present, including: asking for any urgent additional items, rearranging the order of items if there is not a



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- quorum available for the whole meeting (e.g. to put reports last), reminding members to identify any agenda items that may pose a conflict of interest and getting approval for the agenda from the committee.
- Ensure the meeting moves forward in a timely way. Assign times to items if there is a long agenda or items that are anticipated to require significant discussion.
 - Ask for the support of a time keeper if there is a long, complex agenda with time-bound decision-making required.
 - Throughout the meeting, entertain any proposals to alter the agenda, table items, etc. and if so, get the approval of committee members to make changes.
 - Ensure that each committee member has the opportunity to speak to each item and that all views are heard. Try not to let one or two people dominate the meeting. If a member is going on at great length, respectfully note the time constraints of the agenda and help them to sum up; or if someone, especially someone who has not been heard from, is interrupted, ask that they be given time to complete what they are saying.
 - Keep the discussion on topic without shutting down discussion. (e.g. if members seem to be digressing, remind them of the issue requiring a decision; note if the discussion seems to be deviating significantly from the Council's mandate, etc.)
 - Remain as neutral as possible as the Chair. The Chair may participate in the discussion, especially to bring contextual information forward. If the Chair is presenting a proposal or wishes to speak strongly to an issue, she/he should identify this and ask another member or Executive Director who is present to facilitate the meeting for that item.
 - Help move the discussion forward toward a decision. Invite those who have not spoken to speak. Summarize what you are hearing as the main points of a discussion, including areas of agreement and disagreement, and ask Council/committee members if they agree or what is missing to help move toward the formulation of a motion. The Chair's summaries can:
 - Indicate progress, or lack of;
 - Refocus discussion that has wandered off the point;
 - Help conclude one point and lead into the next;
 - Highlight key issues and important points of consensus or concern;
 - Assist the minute-taker; and
 - Help clarify misunderstandings.
 - The goal is to facilitate reaching consensus. If necessary, a majority vote allows a decision to move forward. If consensus cannot be reached, consider such things as whether there is more information that needs to be gathered or if someone on the committee who is not present should be involved in the discussion. Can the item be tabled for the next meeting, or is a decision needed now?
 - When a discussion appears to be moving toward a decision ask if someone would like to make a motion. Council process requires motions for decisions, but a seconder is not required. If everyone has spoken in the discussion and consensus appears strong, the Chair may ask "any objections" (or "all in favour" if it is an in-



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person meeting) but if a range of opinions have been expressed and it is a teleconference meeting, it is important to do a roll-call vote and ask each person to say if they are in favour or against the motion. (This is particularly important to hear from members on the phone to ensure that no one has been lost from the call or is trying to speak while on mute.)

- If someone suggests an amendment to the wording of a motion, ask members if they support this change as a “friendly amendment”, and if so, conduct the above process again.
- Ensure that decisions and follow up actions are addressed for each agenda item.
- At the end of a meeting, remind members what they have achieved and thank them for their contributions.
- Ensure the time and date of the next meeting is arranged with assistance from Executive Director.

Adapted with permission from CMBC’s “Guide for CMBC Committee Chair – Role and Responsibilities” February 2020.