



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Association of Nova Scotia Midwives Calls for Immediate Action to Address Increasing Demand for Midwifery Care on International Women's Day.

March 8, 2024

More than 1000 people so far have sent letters to their local MLA's, Minister of Health and Wellness Michelle Thompson, and Premier Tim Houston to demand increased access to midwife-led models of care in Nova Scotia.

The #NovaScotiaNeedsMidwives campaign highlights how midwives in Nova Scotia are currently underutilized as primary care providers, despite growing gaps in access to primary care, sexual and reproductive health care, perinatal care, and newborn care in our province. Despite 15 years of regulated midwifery, the current landscape reveals a stark reality: with only 16 funded positions and three practice sites, many communities across Nova Scotia lack essential midwifery care.

In 2021, midwifery-led births accounted for only 5% (353) of births in Nova Scotia, compared to 14% (48,420) nationally. Demand is only increasing: the percentage of clients waitlisted annually for midwifery care has increased from 41% in 2016, to 54% in 2023.

Investment in midwifery aligns with government priorities to bring care closer to home, representing a direct route - and one of the most cost-effective strategies - to achieving full sexual and reproductive health coverage and reproductive freedom for Nova Scotians.

The Association of Nova Scotia Midwives is urging the Government of Nova Scotia to take immediate action by committing to increasing the number of midwife-led births to 10% of total births by 2025 and 30% by 2027. This strategic investment will not only address the current shortfall in access to midwife-led models of care but also contribute to bringing essential healthcare services closer to home for Nova Scotians.

For more information on the #NovaScotiaNeedsMidwives campaign and how you can get involved, please visit <https://www.novascotiamidwives.ca/novascotianeedsmidwives/>.

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