

# Evidence & History

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# Setting the scene

- Physiological birth is the ultimate complicated birth prevention strategy
- Midwives must recognise that many complications arise only because pregnancy, labour and birth are medicalised



# Evidence

- Only 10 – 15% off all births have any “complications”
- Only 3% of the complications are genuine emergency situations (0,45% of all births)
- A midwife needs to be prepared to handle them



# History

How did midwives reacted to complications in days gone by, without any 'resources' or hospitals to go to?

- Mobilised women, upright position
- Counter-force and supportive measures



'They knew that a good birth outcome was most likely when they believed in and did everything to ensure they worked 'with women' and 'with nature'!



# Professional reflections

- Every midwife should be able to apply her knowledge and skills in such circumstances, not only an 'advanced midwife'
- Midwives have the expertise to differentiate between:
  - when their care and skills are able to resolve adverse events
  - and when referral to medical colleagues or a hospital is appropriate



# Professional reflections

- Responsible midwives know both the scope and limits of midwifery practice; once they own the full scope of midwifery care, they will be able to work safely within those boundaries



# Knowledge, skills & behaviour required

- Be familiar with any complications/pathologic conditions related to each woman's health status
- Be able to determine the need for immediate and/or intervention or referral and respond appropriately
- Know how to use emergency interventions, life-saving therapies and emergency equipment



# Knowledge, skills & behaviour required

- Understand community or facility plans and protocols for accessing resources in timely manner
- Maintain communication with women and partner about the nature of the problem, actions taken and referral if indicated
- Provide accurate oral and written information to other care providers when referral is made



# Skills & behaviours

- Maintain up-to-date knowledge, life-saving skills and equipment for responding to emergency situations
- Recognize situations requiring expertise beyond midwifery care
- Determine the need for immediate intervention and respond appropriately



# In closing

Practicing woman-centred,  
midwifery-assisted, physiologically-supportive  
pregnancy and birth care,  
will avoid or resolve the vast majority  
of 'complications'.

