

**LAUNCH OF**  
**BACHELOR STUDIES IN MIDWIFERY**  
**(BSM)**  
**(2021)**



**HEALTH SERVICES ACADEMY**  
**GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN**  
**Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation & Coordination**  
**Islamabad**

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## **Introduction**

Midwifery is a distinct profession than nursing in its own rights i.e., definition of title, scope of practice, philosophy, code of ethics, education, competencies, and services. Competent and qualified midwives contribute a pivotal role in improving maternal, neonatal, and child health. This document proposes an undergraduate four-year degree program to prepare midwives who will be qualified and licensed to provide quality care specifically to pregnant women and new born. The goal of the degree program is to establish midwifery education based on national and international best practices and on ICM (International Confederation of Midwives) standards that lead to excellence in evidence-based midwifery practice, teaching, and leadership. The higher education programs in midwifery will serve as exemplar for Pakistan and region.

## **Background**

At present, in Pakistan, there are several midwifery cadres, with different formal education levels, who provide maternal and newborn/ child health services; however, until recently, there was no opportunity to obtain higher education in midwifery in the country. As a result, midwives were not adequately prepared or permitted to provide full scope of care to women. From UNFPA funding, in 2014, a two-year degree program a.k.a Post RM program was initiated in two schools of nursing in Pakistan (both is Karachi). These two schools have produced handful of midwifery graduates who are currently deployed at various places including schools of nursing & midwifery, hospitals, MCH centers and reproductive health projects. Moving on as a next step, UNFPA along with Health Services Academy (HSA) is planning to offer undergraduate four-year degree program to prepare midwives who will be qualified and licensed to provide quality care specifically to pregnant women and new born.

## **Rationale:**

Evidence shows that midwives prepared at international standards enhance normality throughout the birth cycle and reduce the rates of morbidity and mortality and promote health of mothers and newborns/ infants. Making higher education available based on the International Confederation of Midwives' Global Standards for Midwifery Education and its Essential Competencies for Midwifery Practice in Pakistan will enable midwives to alter the high mortality and morbidity among women and children. Moreover, qualified midwives will provide improved health care services, quality of practice and teaching, further the development of midwifery as a profession as well as expand career opportunities for women in Pakistan.

### **Definition of Midwife and Midwifery:**

Midwifery is the profession of midwives and has a unique body of knowledge, skills and professional attitudes drawn from disciplines shared by other health professions such as science and sociology, but practiced by midwives within a professional framework of autonomy, partnership, ethics and accountability. Midwifery care is provided by an autonomous midwife. Midwifery competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) are held and practiced by midwives, educated through a pre-service/preregistration. Midwifery is an approach to care of women and their newborn infants whereby midwives:

- Optimize the normal biological, psychological, social and cultural processes of childbirth and early life of the newborn;
- work in partnership with women, respecting the individual circumstances and views of each woman;
- promote women's personal capabilities to care for themselves and their families;
- Collaborate with midwives and other health professionals as necessary to provide holistic care that meets each woman's individual needs<sup>1</sup>.

In Pakistan, all the graduates will be titled as 'MIDWIFE' after successful completion of the undergraduate midwifery degree program. This program and title both are approved by Pakistan Nursing Council.

### **Scope of Practice:**

The midwife is recognized as a responsible and accountable professional who works in partnership with women to give the necessary support, care, and advice during pregnancy, labor and the postpartum period, to conduct births on the midwife's own responsibility and to provide care for the newborn and the infant. This care includes preventative measures, the promotion of normal birth, the detection of complications in mother and child, the accessing of medical care or other appropriate assistance and the carrying out of emergency measures.

The midwife has an important task in health counseling and education, not only for the woman, but also within the family and the community. This work should involve antenatal education and preparation for parenthood and may extend to women's health, sexual or reproductive health and childcare. A midwife may practice in any setting including the home, community-based health

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<sup>1</sup> Extracted from ICM Websites (2017: <https://internationalmidwives.org/our-work/policy-and-practice/icm-definitions.html>); Accessed on Oct 15, 2021

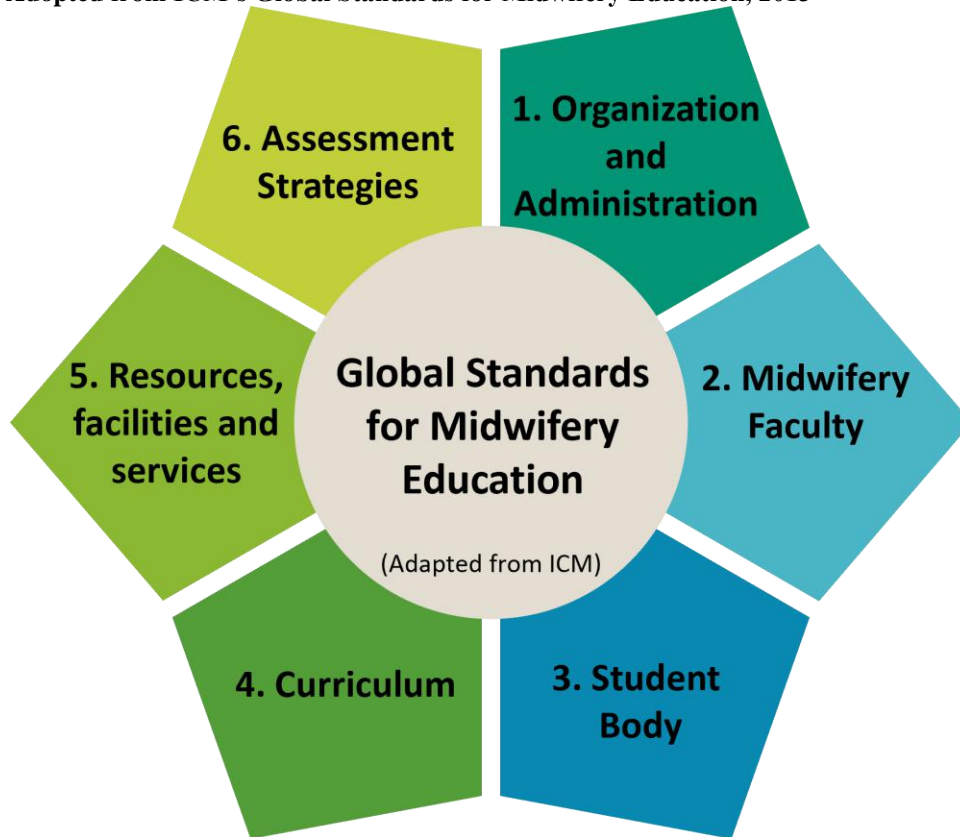
units/ clinics, hospitals, or basic health units BHUs/ Rural Health Centers/ Taluqa and/or District hospitals.”<sup>2</sup>

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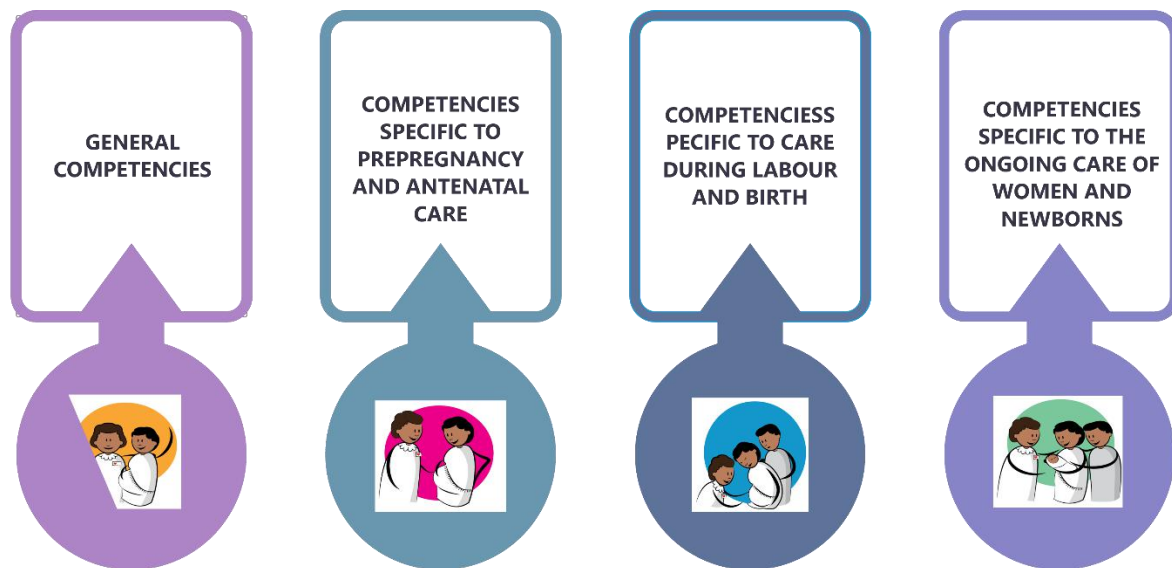
<sup>2</sup> Copied from Pakistan Nursing Council Curriculum for BSM – unpublished document – Adapted from ICM 2017

## Global Education Standards

Adopted from ICM's Global Standards for Midwifery Education, 2013



## Essential Core Competencies: (Adopted from ICM 2019)



List of Competencies (Adapted from ICM's Essential Core Competencies, 2019)

### 1. GENERAL COMPETENCIES

- Assume responsibility for own decisions and actions as an autonomous practitioner
- Assume responsibility for self-care and self-development as a midwife
- Appropriately delegate aspects of care and provide supervision
- Use research to inform practice
- Uphold fundamental human rights of individuals when providing midwifery care
- Adhere to jurisdictional laws, regulatory requirements, and codes of conduct for midwifery practice
- Facilitate women to make individual choices about care
- Demonstrate effective interpersonal communication with women and families, health care teams, and community groups
- Facilitate normal birth processes in institutional and community settings, including women's homes
- Assess the health status, screen for health risks, and promote general health and well-being of women and infants
- Prevent and treat common health problems related to reproduction and early life
- Recognize conditions outside midwifery scope of practice and refer appropriately
- Care for women who experience physical and sexual violence and abuse

## **2. PRE-PREGNANCY AND ANTENATAL**

- Provide pre-pregnancy care
- Determine health status of woman
- Assess fetal well-being
- Monitor the progression of pregnancy
- Promote and support health behaviors that improve well being
- Provide anticipatory guidance related to pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding, parenthood, and change in the family
- Detect, stabilize, manage, and refer women with complicated pregnancies
- Assist the woman and her family to plan for an appropriate place of birth
- Provide care to women with unintended or mistimed pregnancy

## **3. CARE DURING LABOUR AND BIRTH**

- Promote physiologic labour and birth
- Manage a safe spontaneous vaginal birth; prevent, detect and stabilise complications
- Provide care of the newborn immediately after birth

## **4. ONGOING CARE OF WOMEN AND NEWBORNS**

- Provide postnatal care for the healthy woman
- Provide care to healthy newborn infant
- Promote and support breastfeeding
- Detect, treat, and stabilise postnatal complications in woman and refer as necessary Detect, stabilise, and manage
- Provide family planning and contraceptive services.



## Program Overview

Midwifery is an important component of women's health care. Midwives' expertise in the care of normal pregnancy and childbirth arises from their understanding of childbearing as a social, cultural and biological process and from their ability to competently exercise clinical skills and decision-making.

The four year program which spans eight semesters, includes courses from basic sciences, social sciences, health sciences and electives (i. maternal health and ii. newborn health), in addition to clinical courses. A variety of course formats include classroom, distance learning through web conferencing and print-based self-study courses. Teaching methods include lecture format, small group tutorials, self-directed activities and practical learning experiences in both skills laboratory and clinical practice settings.

**Clinical Courses:** Starting from first semester, these courses consist of a practical and theoretical component and concurrent problem-based weekly tutorials. Students are assigned to a midwifery practice as well as to inter-professional placements including nursing, neonatal intensive care nursery, and obstetrical practices. Throughout the program, students will be placed in more than one midwifery practice at all levels of care i.e. tertiary/ teaching hospitals, District Head Quarter/ *Tehsil* Head Quarter hospitals, Rural health centers, Basic Health Units and MCH centers run by population welfare department (PWD) located within the program catchment area – including HSA and PIMS in Islamabad and FJCON in Lahore. In clinical settings, the students will be placed with dedicated tutors specifically recruited for teaching in the program. In addition, the students will also gain clinical experience with obstetricians, neonatologists, pediatrician, staff nurses/ midwives.

## Program Curriculum outlay:

The following tables present curriculum outlay and structure as prescribed by PNC and adapted from ICM standards as well as the ICM's Model Curriculum Outlines for Professional Midwifery Education. In addition various midwifery programs were also reviewed and adapted as appropriate. These include: four year midwifery programs offered by Mc. Masters School of Nursing and Midwifery Canada; Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences, Tanzania; and Post RN/RM – BSM program (2 years) offered by the Dow University of Health Sciences, Pakistan.

## Course Credit Calculation:

- Theory Course of 01 Credit Hours = 01 class of 01 hour per week
- Practical/Clinical /Field Work of 01 Credit Hour = 03 hours per week

The credit hours are denoted by two digits within brackets with a hyphen/plus in between. The first digit represents the theory part while the second (right side) digit represents the practical. Thus 3(3+0)/3(3-0) means three credit hours of theory, while 4(3+1)/4(3-1) means a total of four credit hours, of which three are of theory while one credit hour is for Practical/Clinical /Field Work i.e.

4(1+3)/4(1-3) means a total of four credit hours, of which one is of theory while three credit hours are for Practical/Clinical /Field Work.

## Curriculum Development

This Curriculum is developed using the BS Midwifery outline published on the Pakistan Nursing Council (PNC) website ([http://www.pnc.org.pk/Curriculum\\_of\\_Nursing\\_Educational\\_Programs.htm](http://www.pnc.org.pk/Curriculum_of_Nursing_Educational_Programs.htm)).

The HSA curriculum held multiple consultative meetings with PNC, Midwifery Association Pakistan (MAP) and other relevant stakeholders, to develop the program of teaching for HSA. The HSA team comprised

1. Dr. Mariyam Sarfraz (MBBS, MSc, PhD)
2. Dr. Zahra Ladhani (BSN, MSN, PhD)
3. Dr. Sadia Mustafa (MBBS, MRCOG)
4. Ms. Musarrat Rani (BSN, MSN)
5. Dr. Dania Hassan (MBBS, MSPH)

### Salient features of the HSA curriculum:

The four year midwifery curriculum for BSM program has used the framework and competency standards provided by the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM). The curriculum has adapted the outline provided by Pakistan Nursing Council (PNC) and fulfils the requirement of an undergraduate degree program set by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan. Simultaneously, there are numerous salient features of the curriculum which makes it unique and distinguishes it from any other undergraduate program including nursing or other allied health professionals. It also distinguishes from other midwifery programs offered in Pakistan or anywhere else. These features include:

- Throughout all the courses ICM standards are followed;
- Emphasis on competency based learning;
- Global as well as Pakistan situation / demographics/ data are utilized for developing the content of the courses;
- Almost equal clinical hours are set alongside theory hours;
- Practicum for harnessing midwifery skills are built in all semesters starting from year 2;

Graduates must meet the following minimum clinical requirements:

**Participation in 60 births, including at least:**

- 20 births in which the student functions in role of primary midwife under supervision
- 20 births in which the student is actively involved in the client's care
- 10 births in which the student is observing
- 10 births in an out of hospital setting

**Participation in 250 client contacts, including at least:**

- 50 prenatal exams
- 50 postpartum exams/ visits
- 50 newborn exams
- 50 follow-up newborn exams
- 50 gynecological exams

## Eligibility Criteria

### Entry Requirements / Eligibility Criteria

Candidates with F.Sc or equivalent qualification (Certificate/ Diploma holder, Medical Technology Group etc.) or A-Levels and having at least second division, securing 50% or more marks in aggregate are eligible to apply.

Qualifying admission test and interview is compulsory. Candidates scoring less than 40% marks each in the test/interview will stand disqualified for admission. Candidates who have secured at least 40% in the NAT are also eligible to apply.

### Frequency:

Admissions in BS Midwifery will be offered biannually.

(**Spring:** February/March; **Fall:** July /August)

### Merit Calculation:

$[(\text{Marks obtained in Matric or equivalent}/\text{Total Marks}) * 20] + [(\text{Marks obtained in F. Sc or equivalent}/\text{Total Marks}) * 60] + [(\text{Test/interview Marks}) * 20]$

**Note:** The merit of students with Diploma/ Certificate O-Levels / A-Levels is calculated on the basis of equivalence certificate issued by Inter Board Committee of Chairmen (IBCC), Islamabad.

# **Curriculum Structure of four-year BSM program offered by Health Services Academy**

## Curriculum Structure and Individual Course details

Year	Semester	Courses	Theory	Clinical <sup>3</sup> *	Total		
Year 1	Semester 1	BSM - 601	Foundation for Midwifery	03	00	3 credit hours	
		BSM - 602	Pakistan Studies	03	00	3 credit hours	
		BSM - 603	Midwifery Sciences I: Anatomy and physiology	02	00	2 credit hours	
		BSM - 604	Midwifery Skills I – human reproduction and preconception	02	01	3 credit hours	
		BSM - 605	Midwifery Sciences II: Microbiology	01	01 <sup>2</sup>	2 credit hours	
		BSM - 606	English I (reading and listening)	02	01 <sup>3</sup>	3 credit hours	
	Total			13	03	16 Credits	
	Semester 2	BSM - 611	Computers and Information Technology	02	01	3 credit hours	
		BSM - 612	Professional Communication skills	02	00	2 credit hours	
		BSM - 613	Midwifery Sciences III - Bio- Chemistry	02	01	3 credit hours	
		BSM - 614	Health assessment for women and newborn	01	02	3 credit hours	
		BSM - 615	Numeracy (Mathematics)	02	00	2 credit hours	
		BSM - 616	Nutrition throughout life cycle	02	01	3 credit hours	
	Total			11	05	16 Credits	
	Year 2	Semester 3	BSM - 621	Breast feeding and lactation management	02	02	4 credit hours

<sup>3</sup> Clinical = All Teaching & learning activities taking place in one of the either settings including skills lab, computer lab, tutorials in classrooms or labs, hospital (all levels) – inpatient & outpatient, home and/ or community based.

Year 3		BSM - 622	Midwifery Skills II - Care during Healthy Pregnancy	02	02	4 credit hours
		BSM - 623	Pharmacology for Midwives I	03	00	3 credit hours
		BSM - 624	English II- (Writing skills)	03	00	3 credit hours
		BSM - 625	Ethics and Laws	02	00	2 credit hours
	Total			12	04	16 Credits
	Semester 4	BSM - 631	Pharmacology for Midwives II	03	00	2 credit hours
		BSM - 632	Midwifery Skills III - Care for normal Labor/Birth	01	02	3 credit hours
		BSM - 633	Behavior Change Communication	01	01	2 credit hours
		BSM - 634	English III - (Writing skills)	02	00	2 credit hours
		BSM - 635	Islamiat	03	00	3 credit hours
		BSM - 636	Midwifery practicum I	00	04	4 credit hours
	Total			10	07	17 Credits
	Semester 5	BSM - 641	Public Health for Midwives	01	02	3 credit hours
		BSM - 642	Midwifery Skills IV - Care during Post-Partum for mother, new born & Family	01	02	3 credit hours
		BSM - 643	English IV (Speaking)	02	00	2 credit hours
		BSM - 644	Respectful Maternity care	01	02	3 credit hours
		BSM - 645	Family planning and post abortion care	01	02	3 credit hours
BSM - 646		Midwifery practicum II	00	03	3 credit hours	
Total			06	11	17 Credits	
Semester 6	BSM - 651	Complications during Pregnancy	01	02	3 credit hours	
	BSM - 652	Complications during Labor/Birth	01	02	3 credit hours	

		BSM - 653	Biostatistics and Research	02	01	3 credit hours
		BSM - 654	Sexual & Reproductive Health	02	01	3 credit hours
		BSM - 655	Cultural diversity and family care	02	01	3 credit hours
		Total		08	07	15 Credits
Year 4	Semester 7	BSM - 661	Peri-natal Mental Health	01	02	3 credit hours
		BSM - 662	Early Childhood Development	01	02	3 credit hours
		BSM - 663	Integrated Management of Childhood Illness & Immunization	01	02	3 credit hours
		BSM - 664	Complications during PP/NB & Families	01	02	3 credit hours
		BSM - 665	Midwifery practicum III	00	04	4 credit hours
		Total		04	12	16 Cr.
	Semester 8	BSM - 671	Epidemiology and Evidence Based Practice	01	02	3 credit hours
		BSM - 672	Role Transition for midwives	00	03	3 credit hours
		BSM - 673	Professional Trends and Issues in Midwifery	01	02	3 credit hours
		BSM - 674	Alternative and complimentary therapies in midwifery	01	02	3 credit hours
		BSM - 675	Midwifery practicum IV	00	04	4 credit hours
	Total		03	13	16 Credits	
Total		44 courses		67 Theory	62 Clinical	129 credit hours



