Issue Brief: Updates to Midwifery Regulation

23rd November 2018

Need to Know

The Nursing Amendment Act 2018, will ensure that Midwives in Bermuda now fall under the same legislation as nurses. Previously, they were regulated under the Midwives Act 1949, which is repealed. The 1949 Act provided an outdated regulatory model that resulted in a limited scope of practice and oversight for this profession. The current amendments will ensure a higher regulatory standard for midwives that aims to protect the public by ensuring competent and safe provision of care for women and babies.

Next Steps

The Amendment Act 2018 is just the first phase of a targeted approach to enhancing midwifery regulation as well as choice and potential cost savings for the health system.

The next phase will require enhancing the regulatory framework for the scope and practice of midwives. This will include engaging with multiple stakeholders :

- to address prescribing rights specific to midwifery; and
- to develop policies and collaborative practices that ensure safe care of women and babies.

We will share information on the next phase and as these areas develop.

Fast Facts - Nursing Amendment Act 2018

- Repeals the Midwives Act 1949
- Creates the Bermuda Nursing and Midwifery Council (previously the Bermuda Nursing Council)
- Transfers oversight of Midwives from the Bermuda Medical Council to the Bermuda Nursing and Midwifery Council
- The new Act will allow Midwives who are not nurses, but have completed a midwifery education programme approved by the Council to practice in Bermuda
- Aligns Bermuda's legislation with many countries in Caribbean, the UK and Ireland
- Defines and protects what a Midwife is and can do
- Outlines a registration and re-registration process for Midwives which will include continued education and minimum required practice hours
- Requires the development of a Code of Conduct with scope and standards for the practice of midwifery
- Outlines a complaint-handling and disciplinary process for Midwives