

THE ALLIANCE FOR PERINATAL AND REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE'S POSITION STATEMENT ON INDIGENOUS MIDWIVES AND INDIGENOUS MIDWIFERY

We are deeply concerned by reports from midwives who attended the 2026 International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) Congress and that the ICM position statement on partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous midwives had been 'temporarily suspended' (while under review), and that the term 'Indigenous midwifery' was made to feel unwelcome within Congress spaces. This is problematic and extremely alarming. The recognition, visibility, and inclusion of Indigenous midwives and Indigenous knowledge systems within global maternity and midwifery leadership is paramount. Updates to position statements of international professional organisations are standard practice, but a 'suspension' is unnecessary and risks causing potential irreversible harm. We strongly recommend that whilst a review is undertaken the existing statement remains in place and call on the ICM to resolve the situation urgently.

Our international alliance (Alliance for Perinatal and Reproductive Justice) was formally established in 2023, through a shared commitment to improving Indigenous maternal, infant, and family wellbeing and to advancing Indigenous-led solutions grounded in culture, community, and self-determination. Across Aotearoa New Zealand, Canada, Australia, the United States, and the Arctic, our Alliance brings together Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers, clinicians, Elders, advocates, and community leaders who are united in the belief that Indigenous knowledge, leadership, and ways of caring are essential to the flourishing of Indigenous families.

We reject the erasure of Indigenous identities, knowledge systems, and practices within maternity and midwifery spaces. We affirm the right of Indigenous midwives to name, define, practise, and lead Indigenous midwifery within their own communities and nations. We recognise that supporting Indigenous midwives is inseparable from supporting Indigenous families to thrive. We call for meaningful engagement with Indigenous midwives, respect for Indigenous leadership, and accountability to Indigenous communities in all decisions that affect maternity care and reproductive justice.

On behalf of **The Alliance for Perinatal and Reproductive Justice**,



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