

PRESS RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

MATERNITY SUPPORT THERAPIST PROGRAMME

(BIRTH AND POSTNATAL "DOULA" TRAINING)

Studies have shown that the continued support of an appropriately prepared female companion during labour can improve the outcome for both mother and baby, being more likely to result in a normal birth without intervention or complications, providing the mother and her partner with a safer and more satisfying experience and, indirectly, preventing ongoing complications such as postnatal depression. The use of complementary therapies in maternity care is also extremely popular; in labour they can help to relieve pain and fear and to aid progress, whilst postnatally they can facilitate establishment of breastfeeding and may reduce the incidence of postnatal depression. Women are increasingly prepared to pay for services which provide them with a satisfying childbearing experience, and some engage the services of a doula (a lay birth companion) to accompany them during labour. Unfortunately, there is currently no formal accredited and regulated doula training or registration, although this is currently being addressed by the Federation of Antenatal Educators (FEDANT). Furthermore, the current ad hoc use of complementary therapies by doulas with little or no training and a poorly developed understanding of their application to pregnancy, labour and postnatal physiology is potentially putting mothers and babies at risk.

As the leading provider of professional education on the safety of complementary therapies in pregnancy and childbirth, Expectancy is pleased to announce its exciting new Maternity Support Therapist programme. The programme aims to prepare interested women to acquire the knowledge and skills to use a range of complementary therapies and natural remedies safely and appropriately when accompanying women during labour and birth or in the early days of motherhood. It is particularly appropriate for maternity support workers wishing to extend their role, those considering midwifery training, complementary therapists intending to accompany women in labour and doulas keen to use complementary therapies safely. Students may undertake either the Birth Support Therapist or the Postnatal Support Therapist pathway, or a combination of the two to become an Expectancy-registered Maternity Support Therapist.

This modular Programme will commence at the Holistic Birthing Centre in Northwich, Cheshire in October 2009. Negotiations are underway for accreditation with the University of Greenwich and for professional accreditation and access to appropriate insurance cover. It is hoped that this Programme will pave the way for a more formal educational route for doulas in the UK and the development of a defined role, in conjunction with that of the midwife, for those choosing to work as birth or postnatal supporters. As with all our courses, the Programme emphasises safety, professional accountability and high standards of practice and care.

Interested applicants should email Expectancy's Director, Denise Tiran on info@expectancy.co.uk or the Programme Leader, Maggie Evans on maggiects@btopenworld.com for further information. We are especially keen to receive applications from maternity support workers currently working in the NHS. In-house provision can also be arranged for maternity units considering the Programme for a group of maternity support workers.

Introductory offer - 20% discount for fees paid in full before July 2009
www.expectancy.co.uk / 08452 301 323