



# CARING FOR PREGNANT CLIENTS

## Course Information for Prospective Students

**Accredited by the Federation of Holistic Therapists (FHT)**  
**Academically credit-rated by Greenwich University, 5 credits, foundation level**  
**(2 day taught course with Certificate of Attendance;**  
**3 month Distance Learning option with Certificate of Completion)**

## Introduction

Pregnant women frequently consult complementary practitioners for treatment, for relaxation and to relieve discomforts such as sickness and backache, to ease labour pain and to help them adapt to motherhood and breastfeeding. It is also estimated that nearly half of expectant mothers self-administer substances such as herbal and homeopathic remedies. In addition, some maternity units now offer therapies such as aromatherapy, reflexology, hypnosis and acupuncture, although the availability within the NHS remains limited. Practitioners of many complementary therapies enjoy treating pregnant women and some may wish to accompany them in labour. However there is much controversy surrounding the safety of complementary therapies in pregnancy and childbirth and some practitioners decline to treat expectant mothers until they have undertaken specialist education to equip them to do so. Those who are keen to extend their skills and knowledge have difficulty in accessing courses of an appropriate academic standard, or with a particular focus on the safe and effective incorporation of complementary therapies into conventional maternity care.

**This unique, flexible theoretical Caring for Pregnant Clients course**, suitable for continuing professional development, is aimed at complementary therapy professionals working with, or wishing to treat pregnant and childbearing women safely and appropriately. The course provides a theoretical basis, in line with current core curricula of several complementary therapy training programmes, to enhance therapists' understanding about and appreciation of complementary therapies specifically applied to the care of pregnant and childbearing women, focusing particularly on the issues of **safety, efficacy and evidence-based practice**. It is broad enough to facilitate flexibility of content to meet the needs of individuals within the group. Clinical experience is *not* a compulsory component of the course as it may not be relevant, accessible or practical for all students.

The course is accredited by the **Federation of Holistic Therapists** for continuing professional development. Completion of this course enables therapists to progress to Expectancy's courses on Implementing Aromatherapy in Maternity Care (for aromatherapists) or Reflexology Techniques for Maternity Care (for reflexologists), both of which are accredited by the University of Greenwich, London. Those wishing specifically to accompany women in labour can progress to Expectancy's Maternity Support Therapist course, similar in concept to a doula training and which is fully accredited by the University of Greenwich, 15 credits at foundation level. The Caring for Pregnant Clients course is a prerequisite to progressing on to the Maternity Support Therapist programme.

**Practical details:** The taught course is run at a variety of venues around the country, including the Holistic Birthing Centre near Manchester and centres in London. **Bespoke courses are also available in-house** for colleges of further education and other institutions which provide complementary therapy education and training. Single and multidisciplinary therapy groups of between 6 and 20 can be accommodated for the taught course, depending on the chosen content and the venue.

A **distance learning version** is also available for those therapists unable to attend a taught course. Students can choose to complete the course materials by themselves and submit the finished work to obtain their certificate, or may wish to opt to have an online tutor with whom they can liaise by email. Successful completion and submission of the exercises within a 3 month period entitles the student to receive a Certificate of Completion.

**Courses are facilitated** by experienced university lecturers who are practising midwives with qualifications in a variety of complementary therapies.

**Applications:** Prospective students should contact Expectancy via the website on [www.expectancy.co.uk](http://www.expectancy.co.uk) or by telephone on 08452 301 323 for further details. Applications may be made by downloading the application form from the website.

**Fees:** for academic year commencing September 2009 to July 2010 – taught course £295; Distance learning course with online tutor £195; distance learning course, materials only £85  
Students wishing to submit their work to the University of Greenwich (optional and only recommended if you are planning to undertake a degree) are required to pay an additional £150 assessment administration fee.

## Course outline: Caring for Pregnant Clients

*Aims of the Course:* the course aims to provide students with the opportunity to:

- examine critically the concept of increasing integration of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) into the conventional maternity services
- acquire the knowledge and skills of specific elements of CAM in order to facilitate appropriate and safe choices for pregnant and childbearing women, including a critical analysis of the risks and benefits
- explore the physio-pathological, social and psychological issues related to pregnancy and childbirth, together with an overview of the conventional maternity services, investigations and care
- reflect on the issues of professional accountability, legal and ethical dilemmas and health and safety when complementary therapies are offered to pregnant and childbearing women in order to act as an advocate for integrated maternity care

*Learning outcomes of the course:* by the end of the course students will be able to:

- demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of pregnancy, labour and postnatal physiology and safely apply their specific complementary therapies and other general aspects related to natural remedies and manual techniques in maternity care
- account for the popularity of and demand for CAM by the general public and by pregnant women in particular and acknowledge the need for greater integration into the conventional maternity services
- analyse critically the available evidence and demonstrate a wide knowledge of the published literature to support the safety and efficacy of different complementary strategies in order to facilitate women to make informed choices according to individual needs

*Indicative content:* Content of the taught course is adaptable according to the needs of the participants but will usually follow the programme below.

Students requiring the distance learning version will be sent the course materials and a guide to home study; they are also allocated a tutor for email support.

<b>Day 1</b> 0930 – 1030	Introduction to <b>Complementary Therapies in Maternity Care:</b> reasons for increased interest amongst mothers and midwives; legal, ethical and professional issues for complementary therapists
<b>1100 - 1300</b>	<b>Pregnancy:</b> maternal physiological changes during pregnancy; symptoms and discomforts of pregnancy and implications of these for therapists. Aims and schemes of antenatal care; special tests and investigations; the role of the midwife and other members of the maternity care team
<b>1400 – 1700</b>	<b>Labour:</b> related anatomy and physiology; aims and care in labour and delivery; pain relief; applying complementary therapies in labour

<b>Day 2</b> 0930 – 1100	<b>Safety of complementary therapies</b> in pregnancy, childbirth and for new mothers and babies: aromatherapy, massage, reflexology, herbal medicine, homeopathic remedies, etc
1130 – 1300	<b>Postnatal care:</b> maternal changes and the baby's adaptation to life outside the uterus; daily care breast feeding; implications for therapists

1400 – 1600

**Women's health:** infertility and preconception care; implications for complementary practitioners

*Teaching and learning activities:*

- a taught course, equivalent to two full days, provides an opportunity for introduction of the subject within a group environment to facilitate discussion
- informal lecture-discussions, group work, practical sessions where appropriate and guided independent study feature in the taught course
- reflective exercises and clinical scenarios are also used to encourage students to apply their developing knowledge of pregnancy and childbirth physiology and the maternity services to the specific safe use of their own complementary therapies expertise

*Assessment:* There is no formal assessment for students attending the taught course; it is intended that students depart and reflect on the course content and apply it to their own clinical situation. For those undertaking the distance learning version, the online tutor provides support to enable students to complete the exercises in the learning materials – this ensures that the work has been undertaken but is intended as a formative, rather than a summative, assessment and no pass/fail criteria are applied.

*Recommended reading and resources:*

- Mackereth P and Tiran D (eds) 2002 *Clinical Reflexology : a Guide for Health\_Professionals* Elsevier Science London
- McGrail A and Metland D 2004 *Expecting: Everything You Need to Know about Pregnancy, Labour and Birth* Virago Press (recommended)
- Tiran D 2007 *Teach Yourself Positive Pregnancy* Hodder Headline London
- Tiran D 2003 *Bailliere's Midwives' Dictionary* 10<sup>th</sup> ed Elsevier Science London (11<sup>th</sup> edition due out end 2007)
- Tiran D 2003 *Nausea and Vomiting in Pregnancy: an Integrated Approach to Care* Elsevier Science London
- Tiran D, Mack (eds.) 2000, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. *Complementary Therapies for Pregnancy and Childbirth* Balliere Tindall, London
- Tiran D 2000 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. *Clinical Aromatherapy for Pregnancy & Childbirth* Harcourt Health Sciences London

Other contemporary texts and research and review papers will be utilised during the course and students will be encouraged to search the professional databases (eg [www.nccam.nih.gov](http://www.nccam.nih.gov) ) for evidence of safety and efficacy of complementary therapies. Students will be facilitated to apply generic evidence to the specific clinical field of pregnancy and childbirth and to consider opportunities for their own future research.