



Reflexology techniques for midwifery practice

This course, normally delivered as three full or eight half days, is accredited by the University of Greenwich, London and aims to prepare midwives to develop the relevant knowledge and skills to use reflex zone therapy techniques in their practice, subject to approval from their employing authority. It is also open to health visitors, antenatal teachers, doulas and obstetricians. Reflexologists who are not midwives are eligible to attend this course following completion of either Expectancy's course on Caring for Pregnant Clients or the Birth Support Therapist course.

Students who successfully complete the written assignment following the taught course will be awarded 15 credits at academic level 3, which can be used as Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) towards other undergraduate studies they may be completing. Negotiations are ongoing for midwives who complete the course to obtain indemnity insurance cover to use reflex zone therapy for pregnant and labouring women in private practice.

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 knowledge and skills of specific reflexology techniques in order to facilitate appropriate and safe choices for pregnant and childbearing women, including a critical analysis of the risks and benefits
- analyse the feasibility and practicalities of incorporating reflexology into their personal professional practice
- reflect on the issues of professional accountability, legal and ethical dilemmas and health and safety when reflexology is offered to pregnant and childbearing women in order to act as an advocate for integrated maternity care

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

- demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of reflexology and its specific application to pregnant, labouring or newly delivered mothers
- account for the popularity of and demand for complementary medicine by the public in general 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 reflexology in order to facilitate women to make informed choices according to individual needs

Indicative content:

Introduction to the theory and practice of reflexology; indications, precautions, contraindications, side-effects, complications, mode of action of reflexology with direct application to physiology and potential pathology; research evidence of reflexology for both safety and efficacy

Legal, ethical and professional issues related to education, regulation, research and reflexology, including professional standards and boundaries, health and safety factors, communication and multidisciplinary collaboration, record keeping and consent

Teaching and learning activities:

- this course is designed as a taught component of three full study days which provide an opportunity for introduction of the subject within a group environment to facilitate informal lecture-discussions, as well as group work, practical sessions and guided independent study
- reflective exercises and clinical scenarios will also be used to encourage students to apply their developing reflexology knowledge to pregnancy and childbirth physiology and delivery of services
- the taught course will be followed by email support for students until the end of the six month period from the point of registration. Students will be able to contact the course tutor with queries about application of theory to their own clinical practice and obtain help in preparing the final assignment

Assessment strategy:

This is a 15 credit, level 3 course. Formative assessment aims to prepare students to submit the summative assessment which is submitted six calendar months after the initial registration period, a 2500 word essay debating the risks and benefits of reflexology within maternity care.

PROGRAMME: REFLEXOLOGY TECHNIQUES FOR MIDWIFERY PRACTICE

Day 1 0900 – 1000	Introduction, welcome; ground rules & taking care of yourself Introduction to reflexology theory and practice
1030 – 1230	Indications, precautions & contraindications to reflexology Examination of the feet; the grip sequence Reactions to treatment
1330 – 1630	Practical work: Identification of the zones for the reproductive tract, endocrine system, head, neck, spine, shoulders & pelvic joints Solar plexus zone & relaxation techniques – complete relaxation treatment
Day 2 0900 – 1030	Issues for midwives using reflexology in their practice
1100 – 1300	Practical: Reflex zone therapy techniques to help women in labour
1400 – 1630	Practical: Reflex zone therapy techniques to treat physio-pathological disorders of pregnancy
Day 3 0900 – 1030	Using reflex zone therapy techniques in midwifery practice (group work)
1100-1300	Practical: Reflex zone therapy techniques to treat problems in the puerperium
1400 – 1600	Questions, discussion, review of zones as appropriate Assignment preparation Evaluation & end of taught course