

Culture, Language and Land in Childbirth Practice Special Issue

Special issue editors:

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Abstract deadline: 31 January 2025

This special issue of the *International Journal for Circumpolar Health* will focus on the support needed to include language, culture and land learning in the practice of childbirth in Inuit communities. Childbirth as a topic is about matters of wellbeing on a lifelong continuum. Childbirth includes relationships that evolve around pregnancy and childbirth as a part of a lifelong journey not as a single component of care. It draws attention to the intersection between land, language, culture and the structural forces that shape the context for Maternal Child Health. It also foregrounds the cognitive and emotional work involved in identifying the issues embedded in the politics and practice of Maternal Child Health, in deciding what is right and in being a just, compassionate and trustworthy practitioner.

While these features of childbirth are present in practitioner dialogue and literature, often they are not highlighted and named as essential. The childbirth literature, while emphasising the value-based nature of the work, and the tensions, contradictions and dilemmas of everyday practice in Inuit communities, tends to frame these issues in terms of politics and power relations, and/or practical skills and methods.

In this special issue, we aim to examine practitioner views specifically through a community lens, incorporating land, language and culture. This brings the opportunity to connect with broader thinking, art and literature in moral philosophy of the community, applied and professional practice. It offers the chance to reflect on the traditional focus of midwifery as a continuum in a lifelong wellness journey and provides valuable insights into how incorporating land, language and culture may enhance professionalism and individual practitioner responsibility.

This call for papers comes at a time when trends are apparent in community wellness research, and some midwifery programs have produced professional standards and code. It also comes at a time when the impact of worldwide events has highlighted and exacerbated existing inequities of wealth, status and power, showing the need for, and value of, community-based solidarity supported by value-based maternal and child services/development work.

Contributions to the special issue may address, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- Pregnancy and childbirth as part of a larger social, physical and spiritual cycle and not solely a medically defined condition.
- The relationship between attitudes during childbirth/childrearing in Inuit community and the experience of giving birth.

- Physical activity and nutritional teaching during pregnancy and childbirth.
- Breastfeeding attitudes and experiences.
- Naming traditions for Inuit children
- Traditional relationship between community, midwife, children and mothers.
- Ongoing relationship between children and midwives who have delivered them.
- The role of culture and traditional teaching. Who decides what is ethically right and good in a Maternal and Child Health context?
- Debates about professionalization and professionalism for Inuit midwives who work in Inuit communities.
- Everyday ethical dilemmas and challenges in community, e.g. issues of confidentiality, individual versus collective consent, conflicting accountabilities.

Contributions can be articles of 5,000-7,000 words, or shorter case studies from community in a practice situation (1,500-3,000 words). Stories or Interviews (1500-3000 words). Artwork or photographs.

We particularly encourage contributions from, and will endeavour to work with, traditionally or western-trained Inuit midwives, people based in Inuit communities, elders, mothers, grandmothers.

Abstract submission

Potential contributors should send an abstract of up to 500 words with a title, an outline of the rationale, scope and content of the article/case study, story, song, artwork to chin@sdu.dk by **31 January 2025**.

The name of the author(s) should be supplied, including full contact details. Abstracts will be reviewed by the Special Issue team, and potential contributors notified by 15 February 2025.

Selected full articles/case studies

Shortlisted authors will be invited to submit their **first full version by 30 April 2025**, with final versions to be completed by summer 2025.

If your abstract is shortlisted, this does not guarantee publication of the article in the special issue. Submissions will be refereed in the usual way, which means some may be rejected and some may require revisions. We will endeavour to place all accepted articles in the special issue, but if this is full, then some articles may be placed in another issue of the journal.

It is anticipated that the special issue articles will be published online and in print in fall 2025.

If you have any queries, please contact one of the editors:

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