

Date:	June 26, 2020
To:	Clinical Operations Leadership Acute Care Perinatal Care Providers Education Services; Educators; Northern FHS & NRP Instructors Northern Divisions of Family Practice
From:	Vanessa Salmons, Executive Lead, Perinatal Program; Dr. Bill Kingston, Medical Lead, Perinatal Program; Kelly Gunn, VP Primary & Community Care and Chief Nursing Executive
CC:	Tanis Hampe, VP Pandemic Response; Penny Anguish, Northern Interior Chief Operating Officer; Angela De Smit, Northeast Chief Operating Officer; Ciro Panessa, Northwest Chief Operating Officer
Re:	Perinatal & Neonatal Specialty Education Guidance During COVID-19 Pandemic

Issue:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many perinatal and neonatal health care provider courses have been postponed or cancelled across British Columbia. As specialty education is a key component of ensuring high quality patient care, provincial guidance has been requested to support sites and health authorities in gradually resuming training activities, while adhering to BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) and WorkSafeBC guidelines. Perinatal Services BC has created a [Specialty Education Guidance Communication](#) and [PSBC - BC Specialty Education Tool Kit](#) to support the gradual resuming of perinatal and neonatal health care provider education and training activities.

Background:

To support consistent guidance in British Columbia, a BC Health Care Provider Education Advisory Committee during COVID-19 was formed. This committee includes health authority representatives for perinatal and neonatal health, Midwives Association of BC, educators, and health care providers. The committee identified it is critical for sites to provide education and/or training to maintain health care provider required skills. For courses/workshops that need to proceed, instructors and participants should follow precautionary measures to maintain the safety of learners and instructors.

Perinatal and neonatal education falls into two categories:

1. Fundamental Education

- The courses/workshops identified by the provincial committee required to continue due to it being necessary for new or returning health care providers:
 - Neonatal Resuscitation Program (NRP) – initial education
 - Fetal Health Surveillance (FHS) fundamentals
- Fundamental education should continue and can be provided in a modified format or with precautionary measures in place as per BCCDC/ WorkSafeBC guidance. Consider virtual options for education where possible.
- Additional education required by new or returning health care providers should resume in British Columbia if it has not already restarted.

It is important to acknowledge the continuation of education may be impacted by the availability of instructors and specific needs or direction of individual sites, provincial organizations and regulatory bodies.

2. Secondary Education

- Includes courses that are not identified as fundamental or are delivered outside of the site (e.g., CPR).
- All update or renewal courses are considered optional during a pandemic unless otherwise deemed by the institution and Northern Health.
- An update or renewal will be gradually re-introduced by Northern Health and sites as conditions permit in accordance with provincial and regulatory bodies' guidance. Privileging requirements dependant on specific education may need to be taken into consideration by sites during this time.
- Extensions to updates/renewals have been provided by different governing bodies. Please check with the specific governing body for the most up to date information as extensions are being updated regularly.

To support the transition to resume education, Perinatal Services BC has developed a Tool Kit that provides additional information and offers instructors guidance, templates and resources.

The Tool Kit includes:

- Guidance on education such as: Neonatal Resuscitation (NRP), Fetal Health Surveillance (FHS), and Advance Care of at-Risk Newborns (ACoRN)
- Questions and Answers section
- Template: Instructor letters to learners (recommended to reduce learner anxiety during COVID-19)
- Template: In-Person Education COVID-19 Safety Checklist
- Resources to assist instructors with virtual education

Recommendations:

1. Contact Vanessa Salmons, Vanessa.salmons@northernhealth.ca if you have any questions about this guidance or the available [PSBC - BC Specialty Education Tool Kit](#);
 - a. For NRP courses, refer to pages 5-8 of the toolkit;
 - b. For FHS courses, refer to pages 9-10 of the toolkit
2. Connect with your site perinatal lead/manager for additional guidance on scheduling/resuming a course for your facility staff and physicians
3. A clinical practice standard is in development to support implementation of the [PSBC - BC Specialty Education Tool Kit](#) - to resume fundamental perinatal and neonatal health care provider training and education.

For more information, please contact Vanessa Salmons, Executive Lead, Perinatal Program Vanessa.salmons@northernhealth.ca or Dr. Bill Kingston, Medical Lead, Perinatal Program Bill.kingston@northernhealth.ca