

Date: December 11, 2020

To: Physicians, Midwives, Nurses, and Perinatal Program Directors

From: Dr. Ellen M. Giesbrecht, Consultant Obstetrician, Perinatal Services BC
Ann Pederson, PhD, Interim Executive Director, Perinatal Services BC
BC Fetal Health Surveillance Advisory Committee

RE: Philips Fetal Scalp Electrode (FSE) SHORTAGE – Update

In follow up to our memo dated November 27, 2020, PHSA Supply Chain has provided an update on progress regarding the Philips Fetal Scalp Electrodes (FSE) shortage.

Due to ongoing supply issues we are requesting ALL sites and providers to follow the recommended actions to conserve fetal scalp electrodes. At this time, Supply Chain, in collaboration with each Health Authority, continues to pursue various options to procure additional stock, explore alternative products, and manage the backorder until production is restored. Please note, we are not expecting full restoration of production until at least March 2021.

Recommended Conservation Strategies to continue with:

Remember that electronic fetal health monitoring (EFM/IFM) is indicated when patient risk factors are present.

Do	Do Not
Apply FSE when unable to obtain an interpretable tracing (i.e. due to contact issues after troubleshooting manoeuvres are unsuccessful)	Do not use for patient mobility when EFM tracing is normal/interpretable
Have the most experienced provider apply the FSE	Do not let learners apply a FSE at this time
Use all other methods available to trouble shoot prior to application of FSE (Leopolds, reposition, O ₂ sat monitor or toco for maternal pulse)	Do not use for teaching/training in class and practice settings at this time or for demo of FSE
Use IA when there is no indication for EFM	

Additional Strategies:

Clinicians are encouraged to regularly discuss the appropriate use of FSE in team meetings and huddles and on rounds. A reminder that **an interpretable tracing from EFM, regardless if it is normal, atypical or abnormal, is NOT an indication to use the FSE.** An internal FSE should be used if there is inability to obtain or interpret a tracing. To assist with this verbal messaging, **PSBC is hosting BCW Grand Rounds on Thursday, December 17, 2020** to discuss the shortage and the above recommended conservation strategies.

The Health Authority Perinatal Leads have been requested to liaise with the sites in their respective regions to keep an inventory of their local supplies and pool resources between sites as needed. PHSA Supply Chain will also continue to monitor levels at the provincial level. Please note, **all sites will receive available FSEs as needed for patient safety.**

Please contact Perinatal Services BC at psbc@phsa.ca if you have any questions.