



CAPWHN Position Statement

Fetal Health Surveillance Education For Nurses

February 21, 2018

Fetal health surveillance (FHS) is a required skill of nurses working with the perinatal population in Canada. Nurses must be educated and updated regularly about all FHS techniques, and the applicability of each method as guided by current standards of practice, context and client preference.

The CAPWHN Board of Directors believes:

- Nurses benefit from ongoing education to support the provision of evidence-based, high quality perinatal care.
- Nurses have a professional responsibility to ensure currency in their practice.
- An understanding of fetal health surveillance (fetal/maternal physiology, equipment, interpretation and response) is essential to the provision of quality antenatal and intrapartum care.
- Nurses provide the majority of first line intrapartum fetal heart rate and uterine activity assessment.

Thus the CAPWHN Board of Directors recommends:

1. All nurses providing pregnancy and intrapartum assessment using fetal health surveillance:
 - a. Participate in FHS education every 2 years.
 - b. Maintain documentation of their continuing education.
2. FHS education programs should incorporate defined expected outcomes consisting of theory review/update and face-to-face interdisciplinary case-based education and discussion.
3. All health care facilities providing antenatal and intrapartum fetal health surveillance should:
 - a. Provide opportunities for nurses to attend FHS education.
 - b. Fund opportunities to enhance FHS knowledge by way of workshops, paid work days, or conference attendance.
 - c. Assist in the development and implementation of regularly scheduled 'obstetrical skills drills' for all practitioners (nurses, midwives, physicians and support staff).

Options for education and/or certification could include courses created by the Canadian Perinatal Programs Coalition, the ALARM course, MORE^{OB}, or equivalent options. Any in-house programs must reflect current evidence as outlined in the MORE^{OB} or ALARM courses, and adhere to standards of practice for fetal health surveillance as defined by The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada.