

## **New e-Learning Program for Provincial Perinatal Health Providers**

By the Alberta Perinatal Health Program

On Nov. 1, 2008, the Alberta Perinatal Health Program (APHP) launched the Strategies for Teaching Obstetrics to Rural and Urban Caregivers (STORC) self-learning program. The interactive, electronic course is available via Alberta's SuperNET to health-care professionals who require or desire basic obstetrical knowledge to perform their work.

STORC is a program of 32 self-study modules on basic professional knowledge for obstetrical care. An accompanying "flight plan" allows users to seek and track learning opportunities in their work/learning setting.

An important principle in the development of STORC was to develop an education program that would support and enhance local "business processes" rather than to change the education structure currently in place in a hospital or region. Implementation as a web-based application facilitates this education philosophy. Another important principle in development was to make the program engaging. STORC draws on audio clips, video clips, line drawings, animations and interactive activities to enhancing the experience of the user as they progress through the content.

Development of the learning modules was a shared effort by maternal/child clinical educators in Alberta, the Northwest Territories and APHP. The collaborative approach resulted in a program relevant to and supportive of perinatal professional practice. Acknowledging the value of the STORC program, Alberta Health and Wellness provided funding that makes it available 24/7 in all facilities in Alberta where maternity services are offered.

Tools available through STORC include, but are not limited to, education modules, forums for information sharing among users, space for resource storing and sharing, links to resources for additional information and administrative functions.

Access to the STORC program is the same as accessing any professional education program and is done locally through a hospital or region. Access to modules is password protected. At registration, each user is assigned a "role." Assigning a role allows users to access personal data and reports for sharing at their own discretion. It also ensures the learner will have access to areas within the application that facilitate collaboration with other similar role-assigned health-care professionals. Role assignment also allows a network of support to continue among the clinical educators who use STORC to enhance staff orientation. Not only can this group collaborate to ensure consistency of education materials and processes, they can work together to support one another in the sharing of resources.

APHP looks forward to the growth of STORC and recognizes the potential for a full suite of perinatal program supports for health-care providers in the province to be readily available at one web address. Working together to provide 24/7 support to professionals in their place of work will contribute to optimal health for expectant mothers and the infants that are born in Alberta.

*For more information on STORC or APHP, call 780.735.1000 or visit [www.aphp.ca](http://www.aphp.ca).*

**Sidebar:**

Graphic: APHP Logo

**Alberta Perinatal Health Program**

The Alberta Perinatal Health Program (APHP) was formed in 2004 through grant funding from Alberta Health and Wellness with a mission “to promote maternal health, positive birth outcomes and healthy infancy by providing provincial leadership and enhanced support to health regions, health professionals, Alberta Health and Wellness and other stakeholders.” Since its formation, APHP has settled into its role as a source for perinatal leadership and coordination; perinatal data collection and management; perinatal quality improvement and assurance; and education for perinatal care providers in Alberta. APHP maintains a website and listserv for information sharing relevant to perinatal practice in the province and beyond.