

Issue date**14 February 2023****Distributed to:**

Chief Executives
 Directors of Clinical Governance
 Director, Regulation and Compliance Unit

Action required by:

Chief Executives
 Directors of Clinical Governance
 Maternal Transfer Redesign and Obstetric Leads

We recommend you also inform:

Directors, Managers and Staff of:

- Maternity Services

Expert Reference Group**Content reviewed by:**

Health and Social Policy Branch, MoH
 Clinical Excellence Commission
 NSW Health Pathology HealthShare
 State Preparedness and Response Unit

Ministry of Health – Health and Social Policy Branch

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Intranet Website:
<http://internal.health.nsw.gov.au/quality/sabs/>

Review date**June 2023****Supply disruption: Rapid Fetal Fibronectin (fFN) 10Q cassettes****Situation**

There is a temporary supply disruption to Rapid Fetal Fibronectin 10Q cassettes due to manufacturing issues. No further stock will be provided until at least May 2023.

An alternative product, Actim Partus, is available for ordering.

Background

Fetal Fibronectin is a biomarker test used to help diagnose the risk of premature labour and birth. This assists in clinical decision making to determine if a pregnant woman requires transfer for higher-level care. Rapid Fetal Fibronectin tests are a quantitative test, providing a numerical result that can improve the assessment of risk for preterm birth.

The test is used as part of the decision-making tool (Appendix 2 – page 14) in the NSW Health Policy Directive *Tiered Networking Arrangements for Perinatal Care in NSW* ([PD2020_014](#)) and NSW Health Guideline *Management of Threatened Preterm Labour* ([GL2022_006](#)).

Assessment

There is a small amount of stock available within NSW Health maternity facilities. This stock may not be sufficient for demand levels.

Clinical Recommendations**Conservation Measures**

Maternal Transfer Redesign and Obstetric Leads are to:

- Communicate within their Tiered Perinatal Network (TPN) to ensure that available stock is appropriately allocated – considering service capability levels and regional and rural locations.
- Ensure stock levels are communicated within and between TPNs each week.
- Rapid Fetal Fibronectin 10Q cassettes should not be used in asymptomatic women.

Utilisation of Actim Partus tests:

Assessment and management of women who present with signs and symptoms of threatened preterm labour should continue as per NSW Health Guideline *Management of Threatened Preterm Labour* ([GL2022_006](#)).

As Actim Partus tests provide a qualitative result only care must be taken when utilising the *Maternal Transfers Decision Making Tool* (Appendix 2 - [PD2020_014](#)). Consultation with the Tiered Perinatal Network should occur to assist with care planning and decision making regarding the need for transfer.

Required actions for the Local Health Districts/Networks

1. Distribute this Safety Notice to all relevant clinicians, clinical departments where pregnant women at risk of premature birth receive care.
2. Include this Safety Notice in relevant handovers and safety huddles.
3. Report any associated incidents into [ims+](#)