A Primary Maternal Child Health Strategy for Building Coalition Capacity for “Patient First” Care

Goals of this Newsletter are to:

- draw attention to how Saskatoon Health Region staff are working together to empower all women to enjoy full support for their infant feeding decisions
- highlight the role of the Ten Steps in improving breastfeeding rates and food security for vulnerable families
- convey evidence-based research on the benefits of breastfeeding and the risks of artificial feeding
- focus on ways of working with our community partners to make breastfeeding the easiest choice for women.

The Baby Friendly Initiative celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2010.

The Baby Friendly Initiative ensures “Patient First” Care is provided in a caring manner that is:

- comprehensive
- convenient
- coordinated
- equitable
- informative
- respectful
- timely

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Revised on: 10/1/2010

Saskatoon Health Region
Breastfeeding Matters
The Food for Thought program was having a session in our kitchen on the day of her visit and as I watched the mothers cooking together, I was reminded of how proud I was of such a supportive and collaborative partnership in our workplace. The opportunity to work with many different colleagues, partners, and families has been a highlight for me personally. I have had to remind myself many times that the “baby” steps we are currently achieving will lead to the achievement of our larger goals. The day we receive the Baby Friendly designation will be a great celebration: in the meantime, however, we will celebrate the journey!

The Baby Friendly project at West Winds has been quite a journey so far. For me, it all began at a staff meeting when I raised my hand to volunteer to represent Healthy and Home at the MBB committee meetings. (Mother Baby Breastfeeding Initiative). This committee’s goal was to work towards achieving a Baby Friendly designation for the Saskatoon Health Region. I recall doing a lot of listening and not much talking as I initially was just trying to grasp what this project was all about. I heard words like “Practice Outcome Indicators” and “International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes.” What was most meaningful to me was learning that Baby Friendly was really about completing the Pre-Assessment phase. On March 8th, 2010 we accomplished this goal. Marianne Brophy, lead assessor and co-chair of the Breastfeeding Committee of Canada, organized this year’s Quintessence Challenge.

Saskatoon’s Breastfeeding Matters group organized this year’s Quintessence Challenge. The goal of the challenge was to help promote, support, and protect breastfeeding in Saskatoon and area. Once again, the event was a success! We had 25 mothers who were breastfeeding 26 babies at 11 o’clock on October 02, 2010. This tied us with Bucharest and Peterborough. Our first coalition gathering of potential partners was held August 17, 2010. Representatives from the hospital, and the community attended. This was a beginning step leading to planning a major conference on policy strategies for Saskatoon Health Region. The policy is needed to help women and their babies achieve optimum wellness.

A Mother’s Hope for the Baby Friendly Initiative

My name is Jasmine Latlin. I am a single mom and I have my baby, Tashiena, ten months old. At the time that I became pregnant, I was already caring for two other children as a foster parent. I was also finishing my last year of a degree in Social Work, which I earned in October. Finances have been a definite stressor for my family, and so I was grateful when my doctor, here at West Winds, suggested the Healthy Mother Healthy Baby program as possible source of prenatal support. My worker, Gwen, provided me with a lot of information, help, and support. The Healthy Mother Healthy Baby program is a source of prenatal support. I have always felt supported by my doctor, Dr. Nora McKee, to breastfeed, and during my stay in the hospital the nurses were also very helpful. They were the only thing that could have been better about the experience would have been if I had seen the lactation consultant as often, and whenever, I wanted her there. My support person, baby, and I all stayed together in the same room. I loved that. We were able to get to know one another and we could practice breastfeeding whenever baby asked for it. The healthy and new mother came to visit us in the hospital, and I really appreciated that she came to our home the next day! It was great to have someone to make sure that everything was going well. I think that the support I received is why Tashiena is still breastfeeding to this day. It has been such a special way for us to bond. I hope that the principles of Baby Friendly, which have been initiated, will be developed further in the new hospital.

Thank you, Jasmine (and Tashiena) Latlin

BFI Coalition Building Strategy

It is now time to look to the future as our community prepares for a new Women’s and Children’s Hospital of Saskatchewan.

West Winds Primary Health Centre (WWPHC) is in the final stages of preparing for the Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI) external assessment. If successful, it would be the first facility in the province to offer this international gold standard of care. Our region’s hospital is continuing its efforts to achieve BFI designation. Principles of Family-Centered Care and Patient’s first philosophies are well aligned to support the Baby Friendly vision.

Our partnership of Breastfeeding Matters, WWPHC, Public Health Services and CHEP Good Food Inc., has been working to address recommendations based on the recent pre-assessment process toward BFI designation. Through this process, we realize the importance of partnering with other stakeholders.

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