



# Ontario Breastfeeding Committee Newsletter

November 2007

## Toronto East General Hospital is now the first hospital in Toronto to be designated "Baby Friendly"

The members of the team that participated in the Assessment were most impressed by the hospital's commitment to skin-to-skin care and uninterrupted contact between mother and baby until completion of the first feeding.

All mothers interviewed reported having their babies skin to skin and support for breastfeeding offered early and often. Observations confirmed this practice. The integrity of the mother baby dyad is respected with procedures such as weights and vitamin k delayed until completion of first feed.

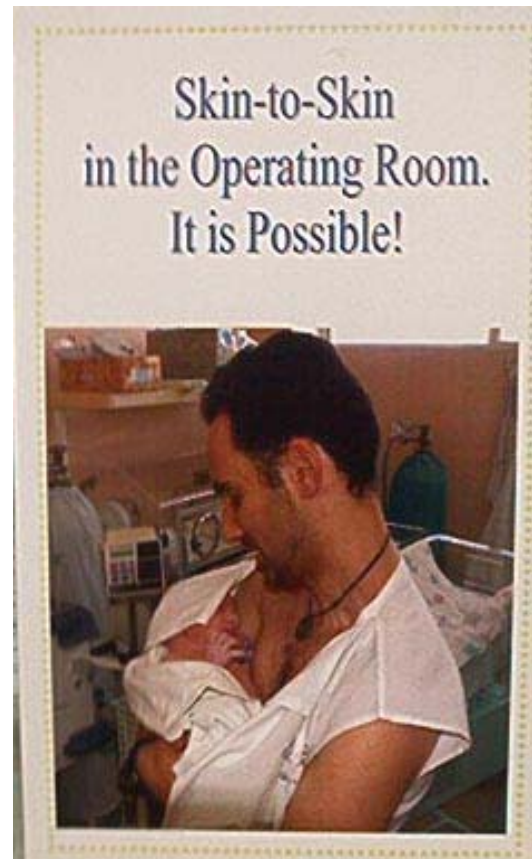
The care of mothers delivering by caesarean birth is particularly worthy of comment. With caesarean births the newly born infants are placed skin to skin with the father within about 5 minutes of delivery. The skilled nurses quickly manoeuvre the infant to the partner after a brief examination and place the infant on his chest. The staff facilitates skin-to-skin care with the mother in recovery within 30 minutes of birth and enable uninterrupted contact until completion of the first feeding. The ease with which the team accomplishes this and the contentment and stability of the newly born infant reflects this awesome care.

Information given to parents before admission lets them know to expect this care – and fathers are "dressed" for the event while the mother is prepared for the caesarean. A poster in the OR confirms that skin to skin care "is possible" in the OR. The staff at Toronto East make it look easy.

*Submitted by Marina Green.*

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This beautiful poster was created for the OR at Toronto East General Hospital.

Congratulations from the  
members of the OBC



## What's happening in Ontario?

Ontario has emerged as a most active province, working towards BFI implementation in every possible way.

2007 has been a busy year for the BFI in CHS group lead by Hannele Dionisi . This group meets by conference call and costs are carried by member facilities in turn.

The BFHI (hospital) group has met 3 times this year and share information and resources even though it is very challenging for members to attend meetings due to staff shortages etc.

The recent designation of Toronto East General Hospital as 'Baby friendly' and the approaching re-assessment of St. Joseph's Health Care in Hamilton are wonderful motivators for other hospitals in Ontario.

The staff of Thunder Bay District Health Unit including Lee Seiswerda (epidemiologist), continue to provide support regarding BFI implementation to other Community Health Services.

As the first Community Health Centre in Ontario to achieve 'Baby Friendly' designation, Somerset West CHC in Ottawa is experiencing an increased need for dialogue and support from other health care facilities striving to implement BFI.



*Diana Warfield from Somerset West CHC in Ottawa, teaches a mother how to breastfeed comfortably.*

La Leche League Canada continues to provide Peer support to mothers and other local peer support groups are being formed and supported through the health care system. A great example of this are the Breastfeeding Buddies of Kitchener.

Breastfeeding education opportunities from a variety of providers abound throughout Ontario with facilities building capacity and teaching breastfeeding skills in a variety of ways.

By continuing to network we will see Ontario going from strength to strength to ensure a provincial attitude of support for all families, approximately 80% of whom wish to breastfeed their infants. The Baby Friendly Initiative ensures complete and accurate information free from commercial influence and provides individual support for **all** families.

## We want to hear from you!

Please send your news to [kventer1@cogeco.ca](mailto:kventer1@cogeco.ca)

## News From Halton:

During 2007, Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital offered the 20-hour breastfeeding course adapted from the WHO/UNICEF curriculum. The course was open to both hospital staff and others and was attended by 20 participants, almost half of them from other hospitals and community agencies. It was taught by hospital and public health lactation consultants and an RN from the Labour and Delivery unit also experienced in prenatal assessment and education.

Both days were packed with information. Academic knowledge was reinforced with practice sessions. An interview with a real mom helped to hone listening and communication skills. Practicing and demonstrating hand expression on knitted breasts relieved the tension, this skill can sometimes evoke. The baked goodies used to demonstrate the individuality of breastmilk

greatly encouraged everyone's concentration skills.



Participants had to prepare for the course with a reading package and complete the course with a take home, open book test and clinical hours in one or two settings of their choice.

By afternoon of the first day word had spread that the course was both fun and informative and a number of nurses from the units were coming during breaks to catch some information or just to ascertain that learning more about breastfeeding and the Baby-Friendly Initiative was not as boring as many had expected.

The Halton Baby Friendly Coalition had a launch in 2004 to commence its journey to become a baby friendly community. As a member of the coalition, Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital is actively preparing for Baby-Friendly designation and has crossed an important hurdle by paying for formula for over a year. Another coalition member, The Halton Region Health Department has also announced that it is pursuing Baby Friendly Initiative Accreditation by 2009.

*Submitted by Hiltrud Dawson.*

## Toronto Public Health Develops A Breastfeeding Report Card

The Medical Officer of Health has been requested by the Board of Health to develop a Breastfeeding Report Card for Toronto based on a survey of hospitals as well as the breastfeeding experiences of new mothers. The Report Card will provide baseline data and will be a useful tool for both TPH and hospitals to determine strengths and gaps and develop strategies for action. This research will assess breastfeeding policies and practices in Toronto hospitals according to the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding established by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF Baby-Friendly Initiative in order to identify gaps and areas for improvement; assess mothers' perceptions of community-based breastfeeding supports and services to identify areas for improvement; and, determine breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity rates among the sample of mothers giving birth in Toronto hospitals. The overall purpose of this research Project is to improve breastfeeding initiation and duration rates in Toronto

For more information contact:

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## Breastfeeding Café in Oakville



An opportunity to share the joys, challenges and secrets of breastfeeding. Open to all breastfeeding Moms and babies and Moms-to-be who are planning to breastfeed.

Where: 301 Cornwall Road, Oakville

Time: 10am to 11 ish

When: Every first Friday of the month.

For more information call

Jean 416 407 8552

## Step by Step, Day-by-Day...

### Point 4.

### Support mothers to establish and maintain exclusive breastfeeding to 6 months.

Point 4 includes 3 phases of the continuum of care:

- I. The Initiation and Establishment of Breastfeeding.
- II. Initiation and Maintenance of Lactation if Mother and Baby Are Separated.
- III. Exclusive Breastfeeding to 6 Months.

**1. Early hospital discharge** (before establishment of milk production) is routine in many Canadian hospitals. According to the BFI indicators, in the event of early discharge:

- ❑ professionals in CHSs accomplish some of the required teaching to establish breastfeeding
- ❑ a reliable and formal system is in place for communicating a mother's breastfeeding progress to community health employees as she moves from hospital to the community
- ❑ families with unresolved breastfeeding issues are discharged from hospital with written plans that support their breastfeeding goals, and they know how follow-up with an appropriate health care provider or health care service will occur.

After discharge from the hospital or birthing centre, all mothers are aware of and can access assistance with breastfeeding within 48 hours. Mothers and families are aware of the signs that their infant is breastfeeding effectively, and they know when to seek help.

CHS Staff Members

- ❑ with breastfeeding knowledge and skills are available during normal office hours (Telephone help is available outside of office hours; a service may be negotiated with the hospital, other professional service or peer support groups)

- ❑ frequently assess the effectiveness of breastfeeding, the adequacy of the baby's hydration and the baby's milk intake
- ❑ effectively teach mothers positioning and latch as well as hand expression of breastmilk.

Mothers

- ❑ receive timely assistance and anticipatory guidance with breastfeeding
- ❑ understand cue-based feeding.

### II. Maintenance of lactation if mother and baby are separated.

According to the BFI indicators,

- ❑ **Breastfeeding mothers** know how to hand express and store breastmilk, and how to maintain lactation during separation from their babies.

- ❑ **Staff** can teach effective hand expression, appropriate storage and handling of breastmilk and maintenance of lactation during separation of mother and baby.

### III. Exclusive breastfeeding to 6 months.

According to the BFI indicators,

- ❑ Foods or drinks other than breastmilk are not recommended until the age of 6 months.
- ❑ All babies are assessed on an individual basis as to the timing of the introduction of complementary foods.

**Supplements to breastmilk are given to babies younger than 6 months only when**

- ❑ acceptable medical reasons apply
- ❑ parents make a fully informed decision to supplement.

### Written materials provided to mothers and families

- ❑ encourage breastfeeding for 2 years and beyond, with exclusive breastfeeding during the first 6 months from birth
- ❑ are current, accurate and appropriate (as well as compliant with *The Code*)
- ❑ reflect current information on how to access community-based breastfeeding and parenting support.

Excerpts from 'The Seven Point Plan and Practice Outcome Indicators For The Protection, Promotion and Support of Breastfeeding in Community Health Services (CHS) March 24,2004' which explain in detail the expected outcomes of the implemented BFI 7 Point Plan.

The full document may be accessed at [www.breastfeedingcanada.ca](http://www.breastfeedingcanada.ca)



**Please renew your membership and invite your colleagues to join us too!**

**Download a membership form from the website**

[www.breastfeedingontario.org](http://www.breastfeedingontario.org)

### The Annual General Meeting of the OBC took place on November 5<sup>th</sup>. 2007

2007 was a productive year for the Ontario Breastfeeding Committee as the committee actively completed activities within the OBC logic model. The active membership has been vital and reflects continuing collaboration with other professional groups in the province. There are 75 paid members who maintain active membership for OBC. Though the membership size may suggest a decline, an audit of the existing membership resulted in the amendment of the membership to reflect lapsed renewals.

The effectiveness of OBC networking has been made possible through the continued support from Best Start Ontario for the ongoing funding and technical support for teleconferencing. Donations for the sustained work has also been offered from other groups interested in the continuing work to increase the numbers of the Baby Friendly Initiative approved sites for Ontario.

This year **Sommerset West Community Health Centre** was designated as Baby Friendly. This was a great achievement not only for the health center but also for the province as this provided an incentive for other aspiring community health centers to strive for designation. As well a landmark designation occurred when **The Toronto East General Hospital** achieved the designation status for the Baby Friendly Initiative. The Toronto East General Hospital is the second hospital to achieve designation in Ontario as well as being the very first hospital in the greater Toronto area. This is a significant achievement and one which will bring new momentum to the wave of interest in best practices for breastfeeding. OBC gives hearty congratulations for all the work completed by these two new Baby Friendly facilities.

Active continued participation in the ongoing work by OBC by past and present employees of St Josephs Hospital, Thunder Bay District Health, Somersset West Community Centre and Toronto East General has allowed other members to benefit from the lessons learned regarding the process for designation.

A growing number of hospitals have participated in teleconference meetings to discuss BFI. This has allowed opportunities for hospitals to network about the achievements and challenges for them

to gain support for policies and practices consistent with the Baby Friendly Initiative within their local facilities. Thanks must go to the Best Start Resource Centre for financially supporting this teleconference network. Community Health Centers have also continued to meet by telephone conferencing, and the active membership has shared resources and strategies to further local efforts to achieve designation. Through the chair leadership of this group offered by Hannele Dionisi this group has been able to set meetings 3 times this year to discuss issues related to BFI.

The Ontario Breastfeeding Committee thanks Kathy Venter for the endless hours of work and travel that has resulted in many learning opportunities for health services across the province and for the development and production of the OBC newsletter in 2007 which has reached a wide audience of members and affiliates in the province. The newsletter serves to reach a wide audience about the achievements and facts associated with BFI goals. Thanks to Hiltrud Dawson at Best Start for the continuing technical support in the production of the newsletter.

A meeting of the executive with the Toronto Health Communications Unit in March identified that the logic model that OBC had developed already contained the direction needed to address a preferred target. The target identified for BFI messaging continues to be our valued professional partners and membership.

In May of 2007 a workshop was hosted by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit to give participants an opportunity to discuss challenges of working toward the BFI and network with others, to review and share in resources from other organizations working towards the BFI, gain a greater understanding of the global and current status of the BFI and any new developments and to learn about strategies for the implementation of the BFI in both the hospital and community sectors. This was a welcomed opportunity and valuable to all those attending.

Also in May of this year a press conference was held with Shelley Martel, health critic to the provincial government in company with the RNAO, the OBC and Dr Jack Newman. This press conference was intended to accelerate discussions on having a provincial strategy for the improvement of breastfeeding duration rates and breastfeeding services. The discussion focused on how the Baby Friendly Initiative could provide the foundation to such a strategy. It received some news coverage province wide.

Also in the news media this time on television was the coverage of the BFI designation of the Toronto East General Hospital. As a result, Global News aired a special segment outlining the Baby Friendly Initiative and the WHO Code.

The partnership of the OBC with the RNAO has produced several outcomes related to lobbying the existing government at different levels to implement the Baby Friendly Initiative into the provincial programs and health services. While this work has been diligent, it has not yet achieved full realization of the goal to implement BFI into programs and services. There is optimism that lobbying opportunities may still exist to inform the new *Implementation Resource Manuals* on the principals of BFI for the province to cover the topic of breastfeeding.

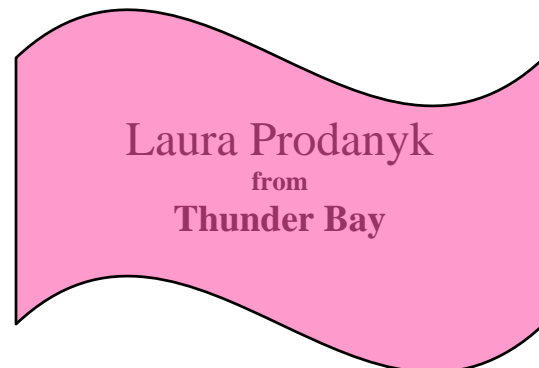
The year since the last AGM has been very productive and reflective of the vigilant and tireless efforts of the executive committee and membership working in various ways to bring the Baby Friendly Initiative to the province. This work will continue under the capable direction and leadership of the new chair for OBC, Laura Prodanek from Thunder Bay.

Thank you to all the members of OBC for a great year.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Levere  
Chair of OBC 2006-2007

## New Chair Person For Ontario Breastfeeding Committee



## OBC NOTICE BOARD

Thursday May 1 & Friday May 2, 2008

### ***Breastfeeding Management: Clinical and Ethical Concerns***

Speakers: **Liz Brooks and Marsha Walker**

Ottawa Valley Lactation Consultants (OVLC) in association with Canadian Lactation Consultants Association / Association canadienne des consultantes en lactation (CLCA/ACCL)

**The Travelodge Hotel Ottawa West, 1376 Carling Avenue, Ottawa, ON Canada**

**Contact information:** Sheryl Hamilton (registrar)  
[sheryl.hamilton@rogers.com](mailto:sheryl.hamilton@rogers.com) or [www.ovlc.net](http://www.ovlc.net)

The Ontario Baby Friendly *Hospital* group extends an invitation to network with other hospitals working on BFI:

This group meets to network and share strategies for implementation of the Baby Friendly (Hospital) Initiative.

For more information contact  
Kathy Venter [kventer1@coqeco.ca](mailto:kventer1@coqeco.ca) or  
Hiltrud Dawson [h.dawson@beststart.org](mailto:h.dawson@beststart.org)

The Ontario Baby Friendly Initiative in Community Health Services (Ont. BFI in CHS) offers opportunities for representatives of community health services to share and problem solve various aspects of implementing the *7-Point Plan* in their local health service agencies to meet the goals for BFI.

For more information contact Hannele at  
Telephone (705) 942-3103 ext 244  
Fax (705) 541-7308  
[Hannele\\_Dionisi@ahu.on.ca](mailto:Hannele_Dionisi@ahu.on.ca)

***Breastfeeding Week  
October 2008***

***Start thinking about the  
Breastfeeding Challenge!***

Keep a look-out for info on  
<http://www.babyfriendly.ca>

• The Niagara Region Breastfeeding Coalition and the Hamilton Regional Lactation Committee present their 3<sup>rd</sup> joint conference:

### ***Breastfeeding: Beyond the Latch - A New Way of Addressing an Old Problem.***

**Thursday & Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008**  
Renaissance Fallsview Hotel. Niagara Falls, Ontario

With Kathleen Kendall-Tackett, Nikki Lee and an interactive ethics workshop with a panel moderated by Janet Matthews. CERPS including E-CERPS will be awarded. For more information contact:  
[karen.seliske@regional.niagara.on.ca](mailto:karen.seliske@regional.niagara.on.ca)