

## Step by step, New Brunswick is moving forward

This issue showcases the work of the New Brunswick Baby-Friendly Initiatives advisory committee and highlights recent successes in New Brunswick's journey toward attaining a "Baby-Friendly" designation. Unique in Canada, the provincial approach exemplifies a long-term vision and dedication to achieving a collective goal. Members come from across the province to plan, network, share and work! Each meeting brings together representatives from provincial and federal government, hospitals, Public Health offices, community health centres and stakeholders including university researchers and community groups. Every one is dedicated to the vision of New Brunswick being a baby-friendly province.

## Education

### Workshops

The Baby-Friendly Initiative requires that all health-care providers possess the knowledge and skills necessary to support mothers throughout their breastfeeding experience. To meet this challenge, the Baby-Friendly Initiative advisory committee offers yearly workshops with distinguished speakers who share their knowledge and insights with our physicians, nurses and other care providers. To encourage participation, sessions are given locally and frequently available, using the latest technology. Registration and continuing education credits are provided at no cost to attendees. During the past year, two internationally known speakers undertook the challenge to tour areas of the province and did not disappoint. Together these educational sessions reached more than 600 health-care professionals!

**Dr. Thomas Hale**, world renowned for his work on the effects of medications on breastfeeding and author of the definitive reference book on the topic, visited Fredericton, Moncton, Saint-John and Miramichi.

**Dr. Jean-Claude Mercier**, pediatrician and author of a reference text for physicians on breastfeeding, Mercier delivered an address entitled, *Breastfeeding and the Challenges of the First Few Weeks*. He was welcomed in Moncton, Bathurst, Campbellton and Edmundston.



(Dr. Thomas Hale at the Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital, Fredericton, November 2009)

(Dr. Jean-Claude Mercier at the Edmundston Regional Hospital, June 2010)

### Online course

"Breastfeeding Essentials" a health-e-learning course on the basics of breastfeeding management, is suitable for staff education as required by the Baby-Friendly Initiative accreditation process. Developed in Australia and designed for health-care providers working with women during the prenatal and postnatal periods, it covers all aspects of the WHO/UNICEF 10 Steps for Successful Breastfeeding and reflects recent research published in peer-reviewed journals. The course was successfully completed by 125 New Brunswick health-care providers with full registrations funded by the Baby-Friendly Initiative advisory committee.

It is available to staff of New Brunswick health-care facilities at a reduced registration cost.

<http://www.health-e-learning.com/courses/bfi-education>

### Mentorship program offers supervised clinical practicum

In keeping with Step 2 of the Baby-Friendly Initiative, health-care staff members in contact with mothers and babies are required to complete a three-hour supervised breastfeeding clinical practicum. Across the province, 116 nurses have received additional educational sessions to prepare them for their role as mentors to their colleagues. Every hospital with a maternity unit and every Public Health office have mentors who coach their colleagues and supervise the breastfeeding clinical practicum to ensure all mothers receive the care they require.



## New provincial tools and resources

Consistent messaging plays an important role in communicating with parents and families. The Baby-Friendly Initiative advisory committee works to ensure all tools and resources reflect a similar look and are easily recognizable as a standard of care of the initiative.

The *Breastfeeding Protocols for health care providers* is a manual that provides up-to-date information reflecting quality care and proven best practices. Developed by Toronto Public Health, the Department of Health was granted a licence to use and translate the document, which is now being used by health-care providers across the province to give consistent advice to breastfeeding families.

Using information from the *Breastfeeding Protocols for Health Care Providers*, fact sheets, suitable for parents, were developed to give families consistent information about dealing with breastfeeding challenges such as mastitis, jaundice, plugged ducts, engorgement, thrush and weaning. Electronic versions of the fact sheets are available to all health-care providers working with mothers and families.

## New Brunswick health-care facilities are doing well!

Although it is clear that facilities across the province are making significant progress in meeting the 10 Steps for Successful Breastfeeding, those responsible for the Baby-Friendly Initiative desired impartial confirmation. As a result, the Baby-Friendly Initiative advisory committee invited a lead assessor, Louise Dumas, to conduct “mock” BFI pre-assessments in four types of health-care facilities. Assessments were undertaken in Chaleur Regional Hospital, a hospital with a maternity unit and a neo-natal intensive care unit; the Hôpital l'Enfant-Jésus de Caraquet, a hospital without a maternity unit; the Miramichi Regional Hospital, a hospital with a maternity unit; and the Public Health office in Miramichi.

Each participating health-care facility was asked to prepare and submit documents for review. A day-long site visit followed and included document and patient chart review, observation as well as interviews with service users and health-care providers. At day's end, management and Baby-Friendly Initiative advisory committee members met with the assessor to discuss findings and specific recommendations.

Overall, the assessor concluded that the participating facilities were well on their way to achieving Baby-Friendly Initiative designation. Strengths identified included the breastfeeding policy and public policy poster, the provincial staff training opportunities, the mentorship program, the prenatal class curriculum and the decision tree, a tool used by health-care providers to determine if supplementation is required. An identified challenge was the method used to

New Brunswick health-care facilities display this poster to inform the public about their breastfeeding policy.



This poster suggests to parents that they ask how pain medications used during labour and delivery may affect breastfeeding. The poster also encourages them to discuss alternatives with nurses and physicians.



compile breastfeeding statistics; a simpler method was identified and will be implemented. Increasing community messaging and social marketing on breastfeeding and the Breast-Friendly Initiative to promote cultural change was also suggested.

Considered a worthwhile exercise, the mock assessment created a positive momentum in participating facilities and across the province. It also provided an unbiased view of New Brunswick's progress in its journey toward achieving Baby-Friendly Initiative status.

## Another successful roundtable

On June 15, 2010, the Baby-Friendly Initiative advisory committee held its fifth annual round table, an event that brought together members of the regional committees and administrators to learn and share successes and challenges in working toward designation.

The day began with a panel discussion where each panelist described how he or she experienced the mock assessment at his or her facility. The discussion concluded with Louise Dumas sharing her impressions and recommendations.

Three keynote speakers also gave sessions:

**Beth McGinnis**, from the Office of Associate Deputy Minister, Department of Health, spoke about the implementation of midwifery in New Brunswick;

**Elisabeth Sterken**, director of INFACT Canada, made a presentation about the responsibilities associated with the World Health Organization code. She also discussed the importance of using the "risk language" associated with not breastfeeding;

**Louise Dumas**, in her final presentation, addressed the challenge of exclusive breastfeeding.



(Panelists:; Gilberte Roy-Allain, Chaleur Regional Hospital; Nancy Hambrook, Miramichi Public Health office; Louise Thériault, Hôpital L'Enfant-Jésus de Caraquet; Jodi Dixon, Miramichi Regional Hospital; and Louise Dumas, Baby-Friendly Initiative lead assessor)



(Members of the Baby-Friendly Initiative advisory committee, from left: Ruth MacDonald, Jeannette Bourque, France Guimond-Bélanger, Lisa Lyn Roy and Gisèle Powell)



(Keynote speakers: Elisabeth Sterkens – INFACT Canada; Louise Dumas, Baby-Friendly Initiative lead assessor)

## Research corner

### A new breastfeeding tool for parents

A study was carried out in 2008 with pregnant adult women to evaluate the effects of a nursing educational intervention on breastfeeding attitudes, subjective norms, and the intention to breastfeed. The project was carried out in the Moncton and Madawaska areas.

Pregnant women were assigned to either an experimental group (n = 20) or a control group (n = 20). All participants and their spouses received the usual prenatal education. The experimental group, in groupings of four to eight, was also given a two-hour educational intervention that consisted of:

- receiving information about *L'allaitement...un précieux cadeau!* [breastfeeding... a precious gift], a brochure prepared for the study;
- seeing breastfeeding techniques demonstrated on a doll; and
- viewing a film portraying life with a breast-fed baby.

The Breastfeeding Attrition Prediction Tool (BAPT) (Janke, 1994) was used to measure outcomes of the intervention. Likely due to small sample size, analysis was unable to demonstrate statistically significant results. However, the researchers noted that parental attitudes seemed more positive following the intervention, but subjective norms related to breastfeeding remained basically unchanged. Furthermore, a fairly large variation in the mean suggests that participants who received the educational intervention had a greater intention to breastfeed.

Intended to promote breastfeeding and provide information about the topic to future parents, the study brochure will be published as an information booklet by the end of 2010. Consistent with the Baby-Friendly Initiative, it will be sold in locations such as bookstores and pharmacies. Following publication, those interested in obtaining a copy may contact Tina Emond at: [tina.emond@umce.ca](mailto:tina.emond@umce.ca).

## Breastfeeding saves health-care dollars

According to an American study, if most new mothers followed the medical recommendation to breastfeed exclusively for six months, the United States would save \$13 billion per year and prevent more than 911 deaths, nearly all of which would be infants. Investigators calculated the cost of 10 pediatric diseases for which there is evidence of a protective effect of breastfeeding, including eczema, middle-ear infections, lower respiratory tract infections such as pneumonia, asthma, type 1 diabetes and sudden infant death syndrome. The estimated cost included the direct costs of medical care as well as indirect expenses, such as parents' time away from work to care for a sick child.

(Bartick, M.; Reinhold, A.; The burden of suboptimal breastfeeding in the United States: a Pediatric cost analysis. *Pediatrics*, 2010, vol. 125, 5:1048-1056).

## Skin-to-skin

Researchers at St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia have produced two DVDs and a facilitator's guide to share their results of a study on skin-to-skin. Dr. Bigelow and her team from the psychology department reported significant findings in the areas of breastfeeding, maternal sensitivity, postpartum depression and infant alertness and responsiveness. The DVD *Enhancing Baby's First Relationship: A Parents' Guide for Skin-to-Skin Contact with Their Infants* and the accompanying facilitator's guide may be used to present the importance of skin-to-skin to new and expectant parents or to health practitioners.

[www.mystfx.ca/InfantSkinToSkinContact](http://www.mystfx.ca/InfantSkinToSkinContact)

## World Breastfeeding Week – Oct. 1-7, 2010

### Theme revealed

The 2010 theme for World Breastfeeding Week is *Breastfeeding just 10 steps the baby friendly way*.

For more information, visit:  
[www.worldbreastfeedingweek.org](http://www.worldbreastfeedingweek.org) or  
<http://www.infactcanada.ca/>

Please take note that in North America; World Breastfeeding Week will be celebrated from **Oct. 1 to 7, 2010**, unlike in other parts of the world, where the event takes place the first week of August.

## Interesting resources:

### DVDs:

- *Breastfeeding is baby's choice* (English and French DVD): [www.healthed.ca](http://www.healthed.ca)
- *Breastfeeding - Making the connection*:  
<http://www.infactcanada.ca/mall/bf-dvd.asp>

### Books/booklets for health-care professionals:

- *Code Essentials* booklets 1, 2 and 3:  
<http://www.infactcanada.ca/mall/code-essentials.asp>
- *Altering Hospital Maternity Culture: Current Evidence for the Ten Steps for Successful Breastfeeding*, by Sue Cox:  
[http://www.ilca.org/i4a/ams/amsstore/category.cfm?category\\_id=1](http://www.ilca.org/i4a/ams/amsstore/category.cfm?category_id=1)
- *Guide pratique en allaitement pour les médecins* (French only) : [s\\_belanger@ssss.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:s_belanger@ssss.gouv.qc.ca)

### Website:

- Information to help mothers beat the cultural and institutional barriers that prevent them from achieving their personal breastfeeding goals:  
[www.bestforbabes.org](http://www.bestforbabes.org)

### Books for parents:

- *Pregnancy and Birth – A guide to making decisions that are right for you and your baby*. (Revised edition). By Teresa Pitman and Joyce Barrett.:  
<http://www.lllc.ca/>
- *Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*. (Completely revised and updated – 2010 edition):  
<http://www.lllc.ca/>
- *From Tiny Tots to Toddler – A practical guide for parents from pregnancy to age two* (Revised edition 2010):  
[www.pubgouv.com/sante/tiny\\_tot.htm](http://www.pubgouv.com/sante/tiny_tot.htm)

## Upcoming events:

- Baby-Friendly Manitoba conference will be held in Winnipeg, Sept. 24:  
<http://www.manitoba.ca/healthyliving/nutrition/bfc.html>
- 20th National Breastfeeding conference will be held in Toronto, Oct. 21-22:  
[www.breastfeedingconference.com](http://www.breastfeedingconference.com)

- Symposium 2010 of La ligue Leche (French) will be held in Montreal, Nov. 12-13:  
[www.allaitement.ca](http://www.allaitement.ca)

To submit an article or for more information, contact Isabelle Mélançon at:  
[Isabelle.melancon@gnb.ca](mailto:Isabelle.melancon@gnb.ca)

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