

CENTRETOWN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

Policy Manual – General

P111 – Breastfeeding Policy

Policy: Centretown Community Health Centre recognizes the health benefits of breastfeeding for both mother and baby. We endeavour to protect, promote and support breastfeeding and always respect the decision of each mother. Our policy is based on guidelines for WHO/UNICEF Baby-Friendly Initiative in Canada.

Procedure

- 1) Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health care providers and volunteers. This policy will be communicated to all primary care staff, including students and family practice residents, as well as volunteers and members of the administration, community health promotion, early years, diabetes, and mental health and addiction teams.
 - a. All staff, students and volunteers will be informed of the breastfeeding policy as part of their general orientation to Centretown Community Health Centre.
 - b. A statement of support for breastfeeding will be displayed in the main reception areas in English and French. Copies of the breastfeeding policy will be available upon request.
- 2) Ensure all health care providers have the knowledge and skills necessary to implement the Breastfeeding Policy.
 - a. All staff will receive education and training about breastfeeding. Health care providers directly involved with breastfeeding assessment, support and intervention will be offered the breastfeeding fundamentals course provided by Champlain Maternal Newborn Regional Program or the e-learning breastfeeding course developed by the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario. When possible, new staff will receive training within six months of commencing their employment.
 - b. The responsibility for providing education and training lies with the Human Resources team of the community health centre, which will monitor the program on an ongoing basis.
- 3) Inform pregnant women and their families about the importance and process of breastfeeding.
 - a. Prenatal education provided by the community health centre will include information to help pregnant women and their families make an informed decision about infant feeding. This could include prenatal education sessions on preparing to breastfeed.
 - b. Prenatal clients and mothers of infants will be offered the opportunity to meet with the lactation consultant or dietician for one-to-one consultations on infant feeding.
 - c. All materials and teaching will reflect the WHO/UNICEF Baby-Friendly Initiative™ best practice standards.

- 4) Place babies in uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact with their mothers immediately following birth for at least an hour or until completion of the first feeding or as long as the mother wishes: encourage mothers to recognize when their babies are ready to feed, offering help as needed.
 - a. Prenatal teaching will include informing mothers of the importance of uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact and encourage them to request this following birth.

- 5) Assist mothers to breastfeed and maintain lactation should they face challenges including separation from their infants
 - a. All mothers will be offered appointments within 48 hours after discharge from hospital (72 hours if discharged on Friday) for early assessment of breastfeeding. Primary health care providers will ensure that mothers are able to correctly position and latch their babies at the breast and will assess adequate hydration and weight gain in the infant. Breastfeeding will be assessed at regular well baby checks and additional support will be provided as needed. Mothers who are encountering difficulties with breastfeeding or who will be separated from their babies will be shown how to express their milk, by hand and/or with an appropriate breast pump.
 - b. New mothers will be provided with information on how to access breastfeeding support in the community. This will include written material as well as possible referral to the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program at Ottawa Public Health.

- 6) Support mothers to exclusively breastfeed for the first six months, unless supplements are medically indicated
 - a. Health care providers will promote the recommendation of the WHO, Health Canada and the Canadian Pediatric Society that babies be exclusively breastfed for six months and continue to breastfeed for two years or beyond with appropriate introduction of complementary foods.

- 7) Facilitate 24 hour rooming-in for all mother-infant dyads: mothers and infants remain together.
 - a. Prenatal teaching will include informing mothers of the importance of 24-hour rooming-in.

- 8) Encourage baby-led or cue based feeding. Encourage sustained breastfeeding beyond six months with appropriate introduction of complimentary foods
 - a. The community dietician and lactation consultant will facilitate workshops on an ongoing basis on how to introduce complementary foods after six months of age while maintaining breastfeeding.
 - b. All staff and volunteers will ensure that their practices adhere to the *International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes* and all subsequent relevant WHO resolutions. Educational materials sponsored by companies that market items covered under *The Code* will not be displayed in the centre or distributed to clients. Breast milk substitutes and related products will not be promoted or distributed by staff or volunteers unless medically indicated.

9) Support mothers to feed and care for their breastfeeding babies without the use of artificial teats or pacifiers (dummies or soothers).

10) Provide seamless transition between the services provided by the hospital, community health services and peer support programs. Apply principles of Primary Health Care and Population Health to support the continuum of care and implement strategies that affect the broad determinants that will improve breastfeeding outcomes.

1

- a. The lactation consultant will represent CCHC on the Breastfeeding Promotion Sub-Committee (of the Champlain Maternal Newborn Regional Program), collaborating with other agencies to provide and coordinate effective services to protect, promote and support breastfeeding.
- b. Physicians providing obstetrical services will ensure a continuum of care for their new moms and babies.

Approved by: Management Team

Date: February 13, 2013

Next Review: 2018

Signature:

