

# MATERNITY CARE PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT BRIDGES HOSPITALS AND COMMUNITIES FOR BREASTFEEDING SUCCESS

## Testimonials from Breastfeeding Families:

"I gave birth on 10/4/16 at Saint Peters hospital to a healthy baby boy and they were great there! They use many evidenced-based practice policies. They have fantastic lactation specialists and because of them I have been successful in exclusively breastfeeding my baby. I also love their breastfeeding support group for the community- it's so helpful even after you leave the hospital!" – **Jessica, New York**

"My hospital ran classes for free before I had my baby. Once my daughter was born I was encouraged to nurse right away. She stayed with me until it was time to move rooms after 3 hours. It was the only time my daughter was separated from me, and taken away to the nursery. Otherwise she stayed with me the whole 2 1/2 days. Once morning came, the lactation nurse came to visit me to see if she could help or if I needed anything. It was great, and made me feel so reassured to have her say, 'Nice hold, but have you tried these positions yet?' Her guidance gave me the help and confidence for when I went home. I have a support group that meets once a week where one can go to for help, and also support from the lactation nurses at the hospital. Knowing I had support even after I left the hospital made a huge difference." – **Anonymous, New Jersey**

"I am so grateful the birth center I used for my child's birth included a consultation with a lactation consultant. Through that consultation, I was also directed to a free breastfeeding facebook group and support group at the birth center where moms can meet." – **Jennifer, Florida**

## Testimonials from Providers:

"NICHQ's Texas Ten Step Star Achiever Breastfeeding Learning Collaborative is helping Texas hospitals use quality improvement methods and adopt the *Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding*. This work will have a huge impact on this community. The collaborative's learning sessions, mentoring and improvement methods are opening up a new world of support. It's also setting the stage for a culture change among mothers in this area, and providing a pathway to improve other health issues that have high rates here, such as obesity and diabetes. Even a small increase in breastfeeding rates in the Rio Grande Valley can have a substantial impact on the long term overall health of the community, especially one where diabetes is widespread." - **Amy, Texas**

"I had the tremendous privilege of serving as national faculty chair of the first ever nationwide initiative in the U.Ss to improve maternity care practices to support breastfeeding, a project funded by the CDC as a component of the Prevention Fund. When we began in 2011, there were widely disparate practices throughout the U.S. in delivery hospital settings, many undermining mothers' attempts at breastfeeding. With training, support, and intensive quality improvement efforts, the CDC initiative changed the landscape of support for breastfeeding mothers and enabled an exponential rise in Baby-Friendly designated hospitals. While this progress has been overwhelmingly positive, and accompanied by a rise in U.S. breastfeeding along with evidence-based hospital practices, we still have much work to do. Merely 1 in 5 hospitals in the U.S. is designated Baby-Friendly, and the majority of mothers and newborns continue to experience care that is neither evidence-based nor conducive to breastfeeding. Continued funding will enable hospitals to continue the work on improving quality by empowering experts in the field to guide the process in a safe and equitable manner." - **Anonymous, New Jersey**

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# HEALTH PLAN COVERAGE OF BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT HELPS FAMILIES ACCESS VITAL CARE

## Testimonials from Breastfeeding Families:

"I am deeply grateful for the lactation support provided by the ACA. Breastfeeding was one of the most challenging things I've ever done and there is no way I would have been able to do it for as long as we have been without the help of our lactation consultant and breast pump that were both covered through my insurance. I had low milk supply and I had to pump in between each nursing session so that my baby would get enough. We struggled from day one because my daughter could not empty my breast effectively. We saw several helpful lactation consultants for months and we learned so many different techniques until we found what worked. I am proud to say that I am still nursing my 16 month-old. I didn't think I could even make it to 3 months! We are able to keep breastfeeding today in large part because of the ACA." – **Yael, North Carolina**

"My early breastfeeding relationship was saved by the help of repeated visits with lactation consultants. As a working mother, the ACA provision that paid for my breast pump was incredibly helpful. It allowed me to maintain my milk supply during long stretches away from my baby." – **Anonymous, California**

"I had supply issues with my first child. I was able to overcome the problem through lactation help and ended up breastfeeding her for almost 2 years. I work full-time and would not have been able to keep up with breastfeeding if it wasn't for my insurance-supplied pump, access to a lactation room, and requirement for my employer to allow me time to pump. I am currently breastfeeding and pumping at work for my second child. I am eternally grateful that these breastfeeding provisions have allowed me to successfully breastfeed both my children." – **Rebecca, Virginia**

"As a pediatrician. I thought I knew a lot about breastfeeding, but this was challenged with the arrival of our third child at 34 weeks gestational age. Without lactation support in the hospital and afterwards, I would not have been able to establish a milk supply for my preterm infant. Insurance coverage of these services was invaluable." – **Angela, Florida**

## Testimonials from Providers:

"I am the Manager for a home visiting program for first time moms. Prior to the ACA, our clients were unable to get a pump through Medicaid. This had a significant impact on their ability to continue breastfeeding after they returned to work or school. Now with the ACA they are able to obtain a pump and pump kit supplies quickly and easily after giving birth. I see the access to pumps as a social justice issue as pumps were easily available to me through my private insurance but were not accessible to our families with Medicaid coverage. Children born into poverty should be able to receive the benefits of breast milk along with infants born to wealthier households." – **Michelle, Michigan**

"I currently work as a Peer Helper at WIC, and have recently become a Certified Lactation Specialist. I believe it is so important to give women breastfeeding help and support. Sometimes these things aren't fixed in the timetables that are available to doctors, and many times it helps a mom by simply talking things out with someone who is going to listen." – **Amanda, Ohio**

"I provide lactation assistance professionally, and I can tell you, many mothers and babies would not continue to breastfeed beyond the first week or two without professional help. Many families cannot afford it (lactation counseling), even though the costs are far less than the costs of formula and the increased medical visits associated with formula feeding. It will save insurance programs so much money to support breastfeeding, and it is the ethical thing to do." – **Debra, Michigan**

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# BREAK TIME & SPACE FOR BREASTFEEDING EMPLOYEES IS A WIN-WIN FOR EMPLOYERS AND FAMILIES

## Testimonials from Breastfeeding Families:

"I would not have been able to breastfeed my children as long as I did if I had not had access to a lactation room or wasn't allowed to take the time to pump at work. I also received a breast pump for free through my insurance thanks to the Affordable Care Act. Being a working mom should not mean that I can't breastfeed my child. The existing regulations that help and encourage mothers to breastfeed need to be protected and augmented." – **Lindsay, Virginia**

"Thanks to the ACA I have been able to return to a career that I love, without jeopardizing the magical relationship between my daughter and I that breastfeeding has nurtured. At first my return to work was difficult but I have been able to reference the laws of the ACA to justify my need for pumping and having a clean environment for lactation purposes. As a nurse working 12 hour shifts, I would not be able to be breastfeeding at 9 months if this law was not enacted and enforced." – **Margaret, Missouri**

"My son had very serious health complications before and after birth. Since he was battling health issues already, it was very important to his father and I to give him any advantage we could. I returned to work when he was 12 weeks old. We work 10-12 hour shifts and thanks to the new health care law I was able to pump 3-4 times (depending on the length of shift) until my son turned one. Those breaks were essential in providing milk for my son while I worked as well as maintaining my supply. Without this law I would have had to use formula since I cannot afford to take an extended leave of absence from my work. I am happy to report my son is healthy (still breastfeeding), my work performance is excellent and we are expecting our second (and last) child late this summer. I plan to breastfeed again and am confident I can, while working full time, thanks to this law." – **Anonymous, Washington**

"I gave birth to my first child in 2008. I was returning to work full time and knew I had no private place to pump. I stopped nursing at 8 weeks. In 2011, I gave birth to my second child. The same employer had converted an unused room into a nursing mothers' room - a private room with access to an outlet and a small fridge. I was again returning to work full time, but with the law and my employer's accommodations, I was able to nurse my child for 7 months. I wholeheartedly support this law." – **Anonymous, Ohio**

## Testimonials from Employers:

"It wasn't hard at all. It didn't affect my day-to-day operations at all...Helping my employees nursing goes along with the mission statement of helping people find jobs." – **Brandon, Goodwill Industries**

"As an employer I feel that it benefits the company, or the employer, to allow the mothers to pump breast milk because it uses less time and money than having to hire and train new employees because you couldn't accommodate your existing employee to be able to support them in a positive manner. I think it also helps with allowing employees to pump breast milk, because it sets a positive morale in a restaurant and then you have happy, quality, productive employees working for you...I think as a fast food industry, being very fast paced, short limited space areas, having four lactating mothers at one time being able to pump breast milk, that if we can do it as a company, in fast food, that any company in any industry could be able to do the same." – **Jacquelyn, Carl's Jr.**

"There's no downside to providing for the health of your employees. There's no downside for providing for the health of your employees' children. And not only are you going to extend the message that you care about the families and you care about your employees, you're also getting the benefit of knowing that you're doing what you can to control health care costs that impact your bottom line." – **Carla, Denver Water**

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