

Colorado Can Do 5! B.E.S.T. Award

April 2012

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have identified ten steps or practices that support breastfeeding and encourage hospitals to apply for the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative designation when these steps are institutionalized. The first step of the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) focuses on policy – *Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health care staff.* Hospitals with clear policies are more likely to have quality lactation support service and improved breastfeeding outcomes than those without comprehensive policies.ⁱ



In 2011, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) set out to understand the level of implementation of breastfeeding policies in Colorado's 52 hospitals with maternity services. Using an updated list of hospital contact information, CDPHE mailed a letter to the hospital contacts introducing the policy survey to be launched and an opportunity to apply for an award. One month later, an email with a link to the electronic survey was sent to the same individuals. The individuals were encouraged to complete the survey together and were given two weeks. Follow up calls were made to non-responders.

BREASTFEEDING POLICY SURVEY: The survey asked 15 questions addressing the [Colorado Can Do 5! practices](#)ⁱⁱ as well as the other components of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) 10 Steps. The survey sought to elicit which steps, if any, hospitals described in policies and if policies exist, and how they were communicated to staff. Through open ended questions, the survey gathered qualitative data about the barriers to specific steps, and information to inform CDPHE of potential assistance that could be offered to hospitals. The table below lists the survey wording for the policy question related to each of the [Colorado Can Do 5!](#) practices.

Does your hospital have a written policy. . .
1. Instructing staff to help mothers initiate breastfeeding within the first hour after birth?
2. To practice "rooming in" – allow mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day?
3. Instructing staff to foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or clinic?
4. That breastfed infants not be provided pacifiers or artificial nipples?
5. That breastfed infants not be provided any food or drink other than breast milk (unless medically indicated)?

COLORADO CAN DO 5! B.E.S.T. (BREASTFEEDING EXCELLENCE STARTS TODAY) AWARD:

An invitation to apply for a BEST award was offered with the survey. Hospitals were encouraged to submit policies they believed were inclusive of the CCD5 practices. To apply hospitals submitted copies of their breastfeeding policies to the CDPHE for review. Seven reviewers (state breastfeeding coordinator, a program evaluator and a program director from CDPHE, and four Colorado Breastfeeding Coalition volunteers including a physician, nutrition professor, and two lactation consultants) each reviewed up to seven hospitals' policies (breastfeeding coordinator reviewed all 18 hospitals' policies).

Practice 2
Give newborn infants no food or drink other than breastmilk, unless medically indicated.
Mentions no supplemental water, glucose water, or formula unless specifically ordered for medical reason (exceptions may be listed as: galactosemia, fed parenterally, maple syrup urine disease, phenylketonuria and infants for whom human milk is the best option but may need other food in addition for a limited period, VLBW <1500 g, very preterm infants 32 wks gestation, newborns at risk for hypoglycemia)
Mentions that if a mother specifically requests formula, staff must explore reasons, address concerns, educate on possible consequences to success of breastfeeding and health of baby.
Mentions that when formula is given to a breastfed infant that the mother made an informed decision is documented.
Mentions that if supplemental feeds are given they be offered via cup, spoon, syringe



Reviewers used a worksheet to score each hospital's policy (example above). The worksheet included a comment area for feedback which was given to those receiving awards as well as those who didn't receive an award describing policy strengths and suggestions to strengthen weaker policies.

An award ceremony was held for the 13 hospitals designated as [Colorado Can Do 5!](#) hospitals during World Breastfeeding Week 2011 at CDPHE during a Colorado Perinatal Care Council meeting. At least one representative from each hospital attended to receive a B.E.S.T award. The hospitals represented 8 large (2 of which are designated Baby Friendly), 3 medium and 2 small rural hospitals.

Judy Smith, RNC, Obstetric Nurse Manager, Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center, holds a B.E.S.T. award she received for the medical center.

ⁱ Rosenberg, K., et al. Impact of Hospital Policies on Breastfeeding Outcomes Breastfeeding Medicine. June 2008, 3(2): 110-116.

ⁱⁱ Murray, E. K., et al. (2007), Hospital Practices that Increase Breastfeeding Duration: Results from a Population-Based Study. Birth, 34: 202–211.