

“Community Provider Breastfeeding Needs Assessment”

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Category: Breastfeeding

The decision to breastfeed is influenced by many factors, including information given by physicians. Tri-County Health Department (TCHD) looks for ways to collaborate with physicians to increase breastfeeding initiation and duration rates.

The aim of this study was to identify the barriers physicians face when supporting their breastfeeding patients and learn how TCHD could assist them in patient support and employee education about breastfeeding.

200 surveys were mailed to randomly selected physicians within Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas Counties yielding a 55% response rate. The most common barrier to providing breastfeeding education was limited time. For patient and staff education, most physicians preferred handouts, 83% and 45% respectively.

Assessing the Needs of Physicians in Addressing Barriers to Breastfeeding Initiation and Duration

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Amy Lutz, RN, IBCLC counseling a breastfeeding client at WIC

§ Introduction §

While the benefits of breastfeeding are well documented, only 57% of Colorado mothers (29% for low-income mothers) are still breastfeeding at six months postpartum. The aim of this study was to determine how Tri County Health Department (TCHD) could assist physicians in patient support and employee education about breastfeeding. 200 surveys were mailed to randomly selected obstetrician and gynecologists (n=100), Family Practice physicians (n=50), and Pediatricians (n=50) within the Tri-County jurisdiction (Adams, Arapahoe, and Douglas counties). An incentive of a \$5 Starbucks gift card was offered for completing the survey. Large clinics and hospitals were eliminated to prevent duplication.

§ Methods §

- A list of 200 providers was randomly selected from the Peregrine Database (a commercial database of providers)
- Evenly distributed between pre- (n=100) and post-natal (n=100) care practices
- The pre-tested 16-question survey included both multiple choice & open response
- Options of completing the survey on 1) paper, or 2) Survey Monkey
- Survey administered between October 18th and December 8th, 2014
- Surveys were mailed in a series of 3 mailings:
 - 1) October, 18, 2013: Original paper survey
 - 2) October 28, 2013: Follow-up post card
 - 3) November 12, 2013: Mailed final reminder

Provider Characteristics	n	%
Specialties		
OB/GYN	51	45.9
Family Practice ¹	38	34.3
Pediatricians	22	19.8
Total Response Rate	111	55.5%
Types of Practice ²		
Group	70	63.6
HMO	12	10.9
Solo	12	10.9
Community Health Center	9	8.2
Residency-Affiliated	7	6.3
Hospital Clinic	3	2.7
% of Patient Population on Medicaid or CPH+		
<50%	85	77.3
~50%	9	8.2
>50%	13	11.8
Don't know	1	2.7

¹ One of the Family Practice sub-specialized in sports medicine
² Respondents could choose more than one type, percent does not equal 100%

§ Findings §

Support for Patients

Most Common Breastfeeding Concerns from Patients

- Concerns about milk supply (n=101, 99.0%)
- Nipple pain (n=99, 96.1%)
- Latch-on difficulties (n=98, 95.1%)
- Medication interactions (n=97, 94.2%)
- Baby not satisfied (n=90, 89.1%)
- Nipple variations such as flat, inverted nipples (n=89, 85.6%)
- Concerns about baby's weight gain (n=87, 86.1%)
- Engorgement (n=85, 84.2%)
- Return to work or school (n=83, 85.6%)
- Diet during breastfeeding (n=70, 69.3%)

* Respondents could choose more than one type, percent does not equal 100%

Physicians Address Breastfeeding Concerns by...

- Counsel the patient on the complication (n=104, 98.1%)
- Referring to lactation specialists in the community (n=74, 74.7%)
- Support group at the hospital (n=72, 72.0%)
- Support groups within the community (ie. La Leche League & others) (n=49, 51.0%)

Preferred Format for Breastfeeding Topics

- Referral lists of lactation consultants and educators in the community (n=76, 80.9%)
- Handouts/fact sheets (n=67, 71.3%)

Preferred Educational Materials for Patients

- Handouts/pamphlets/fact sheets (n=85, 82.5%)
- Web links to instructional videos produced by professional organizations (n=43, 41.7%)
- Referral sheets for lactation support in the community (n=43, 41.7%)

Least Preferred Format Patient Support

- Poster for waiting or exam rooms (n=23, 22.3%)

Support for Office Staff

Preferred Educational Topics for Staff

- Solutions to common breastfeeding concerns (n=75, 74.3%)
- Proper latch and positioning technique (n=56, 55.4%)
- Milk production/supply (n=44, 43.6%)
- Sore or cracked nipples (n=35, 34.7%)
- Drug safety while breastfeeding (n=27, 26.7%)
- Breastfeeding benefits (n=20, 19.8%)

Preferred Educational Materials for Staff

- Handouts/pamphlets (n=46, 45.1%)
- Lunch and learn presentation (n=42, 41.2%)
- Breastfeeding webpage (n=41, 40.2%)
- Web-based training (n=34, 33.3%)
- Folder/pocket guide received (n=17, 16.7%)

Least Preferred Format for Staff Support

- Folder/Pocket Guide (n=17, 16.7%)

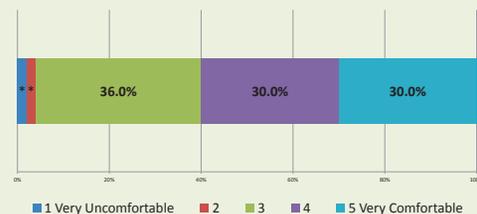
Reported Barriers to Support Breastfeeding

- Time limitation during each patient's visit (n=84, 84%)
- Need more information on available resources (n=61, 65.6%)

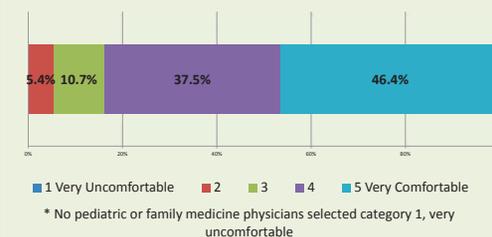


Amy Lutz, RN, IBCLC and Heidi Williams, MPH, RD teaching a breastfeeding class for local WIC dietitians and educators at the Tri-County Health Department.

Comfort Level When Addressing Breastfeeding Concerns among OBGYNs (n=50)



Comfort Level When Addressing Breastfeeding Concerns among Pediatricians & Family Medicine physicians (n=56)*



§ Key Findings §

1. Format of Educational Materials

- Handouts, Pamphlets, & Fact Sheets
- Web-Based Support
- Lunch & Learn for Staff

2. Most Important Topics

- Common Breastfeeding Concerns
- Proper Latch
- Milk Supply

3. Comfort Levels for Addressing Breastfeeding

- Family Practice & Pediatricians *higher* than OB/GYN

4. Barriers Physicians Face in Breastfeeding Support

- Time limit at patient's visit
- Need more information on available resources

§ Since Completion of Survey §

New Tri-County Health Department Website

@ www.tchd.org



NEW: Breastfeeding Resource Page for Health Care Providers

- Web-based training
- Videos
- Referral lists for community-based support
- Downloadable handouts for patients and staff
- Quick links to resources

Lunch & Learn Presentation

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Part 1 | Part 2 |
| - Benefits of Breastfeeding | - Sore Nipples & Plugged Duct |
| - Preparing for Hospital Stay | - Engorgement & Mastitis |
| - Proper Latch | - Late Preterm & Jaundice |
| - Establishing Strong Milk Supply | - Medication Interaction |

§ Conclusion §

The role of a public health department is crucial in supporting physicians and the community to promote breastfeeding. Through this survey, we have identified Tri County Health Department as a resource in breastfeeding support by sending this survey to a very general population, and the feedback from the physicians indicated appreciation for our efforts.

We have identified the areas that need more support. By providing the necessary tools, we hope to support physicians and the communities they serve, expand these results to other counties in Colorado, and further increase the breastfeeding rates as a whole.

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