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## Breastfeeding Community of Practice Update

The Breastfeeding Community of practice, established in 2009, is a volunteer network of now over 120 individuals who support breastfeeding in Halifax Regional Municipality and surrounding areas. The Community of Practice connects with individuals, communities and organizations that are interested in creating a breastfeeding-friendly culture in our communities, and provides the support to help make it happen. Our goal is to increase awareness about the importance of breastfeeding, build community capacity, and help people achieve purposeful action to support change. The Community of Practice has formed several

working groups, that bring together like-minded individuals with a shared passion or area of interest. Working groups meet regularly to share information and ideas, problem solve and explore new opportunities, while using a shared leadership approach. By bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds and disciplines using participatory processes, we create the conditions for free flow of information and ideas among groups and across organizations. Please contact [Ann Morgan](#) if you have any interest in being involved in any of the working groups, or would like more information.



**“It is a fact that in the right formation, the lifting power of many wings can achieve twice the distance of any bird flying alone”**

Author Unknown

### Highlights

- Make Breastfeeding Your Business working group is looking for new members. Help make our Community Breastfeeding Friendly!
- Next Milk Bank Meeting is Feb 21st at 1-3pm in room G38, Forest Building at Dal.
- Do you know a Breastfeeding Champion who you would like to nominate? Each month someone will be recognized. Contact [Robyn Berman](#) for details. ([robyn@halifaxdoula.com](mailto:robyn@halifaxdoula.com))
- Next IWK Breastfeeding Grand Rounds is Feb 19th 1-3pm at the Parker reception room. All are welcome! No need to register.

## Make Breastfeeding Your Business

This is a Province wide initiative that helps businesses, organizations and municipalities adopt practices that promote, protect, and support breastfeeding. Our working group is committed to creating a more breastfeeding friendly culture in HRM. Busi-

nesses and organizations have an important role to play in helping us creating a more supportive environment for breastfeeding employees and clients. The Provincial Toolkit has been revised and includes new re-

sources, handouts and checklists. The final edits are complete and will be posted on [The First 6 Weeks](#) website. Our group has adapted this toolkit and made a user friendly version that we have been using in HRM with great success. (cont page 2)



## Make Breastfeeding Your Business (cont'd)

This group has been busy approaching businesses and organizations in HRM so they can adopt practices which promote, protect and support breastfeeding. Once a business signs on to become recognized as "breastfeeding friendly", they are listed on our website and they are awarded a Certificate of Recognition, which they can proudly display. The Breastfeeding Community of Practice received a \$1500.00 Grant from the Dartmouth Community Health Board for further work in the Make Breastfeeding Your Business Initiative. We are currently

working on a Breastfeeding Policy for Capital District Health Authority which will positively affect 13,000 employees. Future endeavors include connecting with HRM, Rotary Club, Doctors of Nova Scotia, pharmacists and Chamber of Commerce.

Help make HRM more breastfeeding Friendly! This work is exciting and a lot of fun. There is so much to be done, we really need more passionate people to be involved. To learn more, get involved, or access a toolkit, please contact [Ann Mor-](#)



**"Breastfeeding Friendly" Certificate of Recognition**

## The Human Milk Bank Group

The Human Milk Bank Group meets monthly and has as its vision to re-establish a Milk Bank here in HRM. At present, we are in the process of identifying key stakeholders to move forward with this initiative.

Nova Scotia's THRIVE- Plan for a healthier Nova Scotia has identified several priorities that relate to breastfeeding. One of these priorities is looking at the feasibility

of Nova Scotia supporting a Milk Bank. We have been connecting with the province on this. This working group has the guidelines from Human Milk Banking Association of North America (HMBANA) and are currently continuing with the engagement piece of their work. Some other members are currently working on a business brief. This group presented at the IWK Grand Rounds as well as facilitated a session at the IWK Breast-

**"Human breast milk provides a bioactive matrix of benefits that cannot be replicated by any other source of nutrition." Canadian Pediatric Society, 2010**

feeding Conference. They have also participated in three separate media interviews.

## The Breastfeeding Support Helping Tree

We have launched our Breastfeeding Support Helping Tree in July 2012. This resource which will be maintained electronically and lists all the breastfeeding resources in HRM. We have had a media release regarding this resource and have had 100 posters made as well as 5000 magnets. This group has taken requests from various Community partners to have posters delivered to their sites and

have most recently had the magnets included in the Loving Care series of books that are distributed to all families prenatally or after the birth of their baby. This group has also submitted a description of this resource into a newsletter for the Department of Family Physicians.

The IWK has distributed posters to inpatient units and clinics for a reference

for staff, as well as posters promoting the Community of practice website and the Helping Tree have been displayed throughout the Health Centre.



## PR and Social Media Group

This newly formed group was developed due to an increase in media requests of the Breastfeeding Community of Practice, as well as a need to maintain our Facebook page, website, and Twitter account. This group will be developing a social media plan, but is still in its infancy.

This group has just won silver in The Coast's "Best Of "People's Choice Awards for Best Twitterer in November 2012. We have also been working with a group of students from NSCC 's PR Program, who will be developing a Media Kit for the

Community of Practice as part of their project. They will also be presenting a Media Course in which there will be an opportunity for Community of Practice members to attend if interested. Stay tuned for more details!

Most recently, we have met with the editor of The Green Guide, to have a Breastfeeding article included in one of their upcoming issues.

In the news, we were asked by CBC to give a response following the story of a restaurant owner who had received com-

plaints over her nursing her baby in her own restaurant. We also were interviewed by the Chronicle Herald and had a full page article regarding supports needed for breastfeeding women returning to work and in society in general.



## The Evaluation Group

This group began meeting in the fall of 2012. This group has developed over a need for evaluating and gathering the learnings from the working groups as well as the Community of Practice as a whole. The lead for this group has gone to each of the other working groups and introduced the purpose of the evaluation group. This group will be using a developmental Evaluation approach. This type of evaluation tool is more focused on

providing rapid learning back to those doing the work to inform how the group may shift and change.

Currently, the evaluation group will be working with the Steering Committee members to capture the story of the evolution of the Community of Practice. This will be done through an interviewing process of the Steering Committee members.

**Developmental Evaluation is useful and effective at addressing the unique challenges of evaluating the real nature of community change work.**

Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement

## IWK Update



We want to Welcome a new Steering Committee member-Jackie Spiers, Breastfeeding Transition Lead at the IWK. Thank you Jackie for this update!

The IWK Birth unit has been working hard to educate staff around the benefits of supporting mothers and newborns during the "golden hour"(first hour after birth) by encouraging skin-to-skin and

delaying bathing, weighing and other procedures unless they are medically necessary.

IWK Board of Govenors "Scrub In: Each year IWK staff offer a series of hands-on experiences and discussions for IWK Board members to share the work that happens at the IWK. This year a very successful breastfeeding session was led by

Diane O'Reilly, one of the IWK Baby Friendly Initiative project co-leads.

Breastfeeding Grand Rounds: Started in the Spring 2012. These information sessions will be held on the third Tuesday each month from 1-3pm. Details on the topics will be sent to the Community of Practice prior to each session. The next session is Feb 19th.



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Twitter: [https://twitter.com/#!/CoP\\_Breastfeed](https://twitter.com/#!/CoP_Breastfeed)

The Breastfeeding Community of Practice is always looking for new members. Our philosophy is simple. You give what you can, you get involved when you want, and step back when you need to.

If you know of anyone who has a passion for breastfeeding, who wants to stay connected to all things breastfeeding, or who would like to help create a breastfeeding friendly community, please contact Ann Morgan.



## IWK Update (continued)

Grand Rounds session will be Feb 19th 1-3pm in the Parker reception Room. Focused topic will be The Foundations for Breastfeeding Support.

IWK Conference: The IWK breastfeeding Conference took place October 4th and 5th 2012. Participants were treated to thought provoking presentations from key note speakers, Dr. Joy Noel-Weiss from the University of Ottawa and Diane Wiessinger, co-author of the Womanly Art of breastfeeding from New York. There was also great feedback regarding the break-out sessions which highlighted local stories of breastfeeding support.

A Baby-Friendly Initiative Session is now a part of IWK Orientation for new staff: New IWK staff now attend a 15 minute session which reviews the basics behind the IWK's commitment to BFI. Additional

training is in place for staff that will be assisting mothers and babies to breast-feed as part of their IWK role.

Breastfeeding: Making A Difference Course: The IWK continues to partner with CDHA Public Health to offer the 3 day MAD course to IWK and Public Health staff, as well as Community Partners. The course focuses on hands-on breastfeeding support, as well as the bigger picture of breastfeeding, and encourages a breastfeeding friendly culture.

