



Enhancing breastfeeding support in Newborn Intensive and Special Care.

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Brief Biographies

Anita Moorhead: Midwife, Cert. Neonatal Paediatrics, Cert. Health Service Management, IBCLC (1994) Baby Friendly Health Initiative assessor and educator.

I have worked in the fields of midwifery, neonatal paediatrics, early parenting, lactation services and nursing management.

Current position is the Clinical Midwife Consultant (Lactation) Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne, Australia. Special interest in tongue tie, breast and nipple thrush and the promotion of breastfeeding in the Newborn Intensive and Special Care.

Judith Russell: Midwife, Bachelor Nsg, Grad Cert Tertiary Education, Cert IV in Training and Assessment, IBCLC (1990) Baby Friendly Health Initiative assessor and educator. I have worked in the fields of midwifery, neonatal special care, lactation services, midwifery education and continuing professional development . Current position is Lactation Consultant Project Worker for the Enhancing Breastfeeding Support in Newborn Intensive and Special Care and the Royal Womens Hospital, Melbourne Australia and Clinical Nurse Educator - Professional Development at Ballarat Health Services Ballarat Australia

Kaye Dyson: Midwife, IBCLC (1996), Masters in Training and Development, Certificate in Supervisory Management, Australian Breastfeeding Association Breastfeeding Counsellor. I have worked in the fields of midwifery, lactation services, childbirth education and midwifery management, as well as a volunteer breastfeeding counsellor supporting mothers in the community. Current position is manager of the Breastfeeding Education and Support Services, Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne, Australia.

Objectives

The aim of this presentation is to discuss the breastfeeding challenges that were encountered by a large neonatal unit within a maternity hospital and describe the strategies that this team have engaged to effect the changes that were identified as being integral to breastfeeding success. This presentation will offer realistic ideas and suggestions that may be of use and implemented in other organisations that care for sick and preterm babies.



Abstract

The Royal Women's Hospital (RWH) is a BFHI accredited tertiary referral hospital which in 2008 had 6505 births per year and 1196 babies admitted to the 60 bed Newborn Intensive and Special Care (NISC).

Breastfeeding rates for babies in NISC have been less than optimal. 2006 data showed just 42% of babies were transferred or discharged home receiving only breast milk. Feedback from parents indicated they have not felt fully supported as they establish breast milk expressing and breastfeeding. An extensive review of the NISC model of care identified that existing lactation support services were inadequate.

A joint maternity and neonatal services project entitled Enhancing Breastfeeding Support in NISC was conducted in 2009 with the primary aim of developing a strategy to improve breastfeeding support in NISC. Project objectives included a review of staff education, parent resources, and the breastfeeding 'friendliness' of the NISC environment.

To inform the development of the strategy, a comprehensive assessment of breastfeeding rates, clinical support, parent resources, clinical governance and documentation was undertaken. Focus groups were held with mothers, and health professional staff involved in the care of mothers and babies. Benchmarking with similar units and an extensive literature search was carried out. Increasingly, the unit is staffed by neonatal nurses with little or no breastfeeding education or skills to effectively support breastfeeding. A staff training needs analysis identified breastfeeding educational needs specific to the neonatal setting. This informed the development of a specific 20 hour education program which complies with BFHI Step 2 training requirements of neonatal nurses and doctors.

Other project outcomes to date include development of clinical practice guidelines specific to breastfeeding in NISC, a facilitated peer support group, improved monitoring of breastfeeding rates, increased lactation consultant support, establishment of a neonatal nurses breastfeeding resource group, review of parent resources and streamlining access to breast pumps.

This presentation will describe our journey in striving to effect cultural change by prioritising the support of breastfeeding in NISC. Our vision is that this project's strategy can support the increasing global focus on the importance of breast milk and breastfeeding for vulnerable babies.