Collaboration Counts
Improving Hospital Breastfeeding Policies

A Policy Update on California Breastfeeding and Hospital Performance
Produced by California WIC Association and the UC Davis Human Lactation Center

Santa Clara County: 2011 Data

Breastfeeding Can Reduce Health Disparities

- Breastfeeding is a crucial first step in protecting the health of mothers and infants; hospital policies and practices have an enormous impact on infant-feeding success.1,3
- Hospitals that have instituted Baby-Friendly practices have the highest rates of breastfeeding.4-6 These evidence-based reforms must reach hospitals serving the state’s poorest families.
- The Joint Commission and state and federal agencies are monitoring breastfeeding rates and obstetric interventions in California hospitals; outdated institutional policies that create disparities in health care are no longer acceptable.

Collaboration and Commitment Results in More Baby-Friendly Hospitals

- Collaborations among hospitals have been shown to improve breastfeeding support and care.7,8 Working together, staff from hospitals, medical centers, and public health agencies address common barriers by sharing information, pooling resources, and creating and implementing common quality improvement procedures.
- Recently, local, regional, and statewide collaboratives have formed throughout California in response to disparities in breastfeeding rates. Successful hospital consortia in Riverside, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, and San Joaquin counties demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach.

The UC Davis Human Lactation Center used data reported by the California Department of Public Health Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Program to create the following charts showing in-hospital breastfeeding rates.9

**Santa Clara County In-Hospital Breastfeeding Rates, 2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital</th>
<th>Any Breastfeeding</th>
<th>Exclusive Breastfeeding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EL CAMINO HOSPITAL</td>
<td>98.9</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL CAMINO LOS GATOS HOSPITAL</td>
<td>98.2</td>
<td>68.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL SAN JOSE</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>74.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAISER SAN JOSE</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>74.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAISER SANTA CLARA</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>70.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Santa Clara County In-Hospital Breastfeeding Rates, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital</th>
<th>ANY BREASFEEDING</th>
<th>EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O'Connor Hospital</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>65.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Medical Center of San Jose</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>59.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Louise Regional Hospital</td>
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<td>Santa Clara Valley Medical Center</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>81.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stanford/Lucile S. Packard</td>
<td>97.7</td>
<td>86.5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Barriers to Policy Improvement Can Be Overcome

Recent state and federal policy benchmarks confirm growing public expectation that hospital environments should fully support breastfeeding.

The number of Baby-Friendly hospitals in California has increased dramatically, from only 12 in 2006 to 55 in June 2012, yet only about 21 percent of the hospitals in the state are Baby-Friendly. More work is needed to ensure that all hospitals are providing the best possible care to mothers and babies.

The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative focuses on ten hospital policies, or “steps,” designed to reduce barriers to exclusive breastfeeding (www.babyfriendlyusa.org).

Santa Clara County Breastfeeding and Hospital Performance

- County average breastfeeding rates:
  - Any – 96.2%
  - Exclusive – 78.7%
- Ranked 12th in the state for exclusive breastfeeding:
- One hospital among the 15 highest-scoring in the state:
  - El Camino Hospital

REFERENCES: