

Innovations in Peer Counseling: Breastfeeding Support Beyond WIC Sites

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Outline

- ❖ District of Columbia peer counseling (PC) initiatives
 - Peer counselors in hospitals
 - Peer counselor partnerships with home visiting programs
 - Peer counselor use of text messaging
 - Lactation support via Apps
 - Breastfeeding campaign strategies
- ❖ Tips and strategies for collaboration

Learning Objectives

- 1.** Develop strategies to extend breastfeeding support beyond the WIC site
- 2.** Identify effective tactics for successful collaboration

Breastfeeding Disparities in D.C.

- ❖ Low-income African American women living in Washington, D.C. have significantly lower breastfeeding initiation rate (57%) than white low-income women (97%)¹
- ❖ Only 26% of African American women in Washington, D.C. continue to breastfeed for six months, compared to 75% of white women¹

1. Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (2015). *District of Columbia department of health supports peer counseling to improve breastfeeding rates*. Retrieved from <http://www.astho.org/MCH/BF/Peer-and-Professional-Support/DC/HYS/>

District of Columbia Breastfeeding Support Progress

	2014	2016
Number of WIC Peer Counselors	4	11
WIC Breastfeeding Initiation Rates	52%	62%
Percentage of live births at BFH ²	12%	32%
DC Ever Breastfed ²	78%	83%

2. CDC National Immunization Survey (NIS) 2014-2015, among 2013 births.

Peer Counselors in Hospitals

- ❖ Grant awarded by Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)
- ❖ Sub-granted to the D.C. Breastfeeding Coalition (DCBFC)
- ❖ Peer Counselor visits prenatal and post-partum floors in hospitals and sees clients in outpatient lactation center in southeast Washington, D.C.
- ❖ Makes referrals to WIC sites and secures primary care appointments

Data Collection

❖ DCBFC sends reports to DOH to monitor progress of the Peer Counselor (PC)

❖ **Data collected**

- ❖ Number of peer counselor clients
- ❖ Number of appointments made
- ❖ Impact on breastfeeding initiation rates

**BF initiation increased
from 56.6% to 62%
since project start!**

Lessons Learned and Moving Forward

❖ **Lessons Learned**

- ❖ Establish an official MOU prior to the project start
- ❖ Communicate project goals to all parties involved

❖ **Moving Forward**

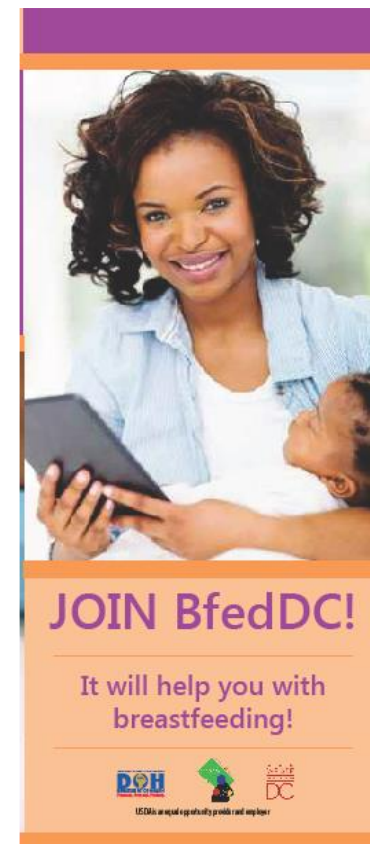
- ❖ Continue with current PC project at United Medical Center and expand to Medstar Washington Hospital Center
- ❖ Hire PC at Providence Hospital
- ❖ Compare project outcomes

Peer Counselors in Home Visiting Programs

- ❖ Peer counselors are trained in home visiting and receive referrals from Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Health's Home Visitation Program
- ❖ Peer counselors provide breastfeeding support in the home and make WIC appointments/referrals
- ❖ Partners: Mary's Center, Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant Program, DOH Home Visiting Program Department

Peer Counselor Texting Program

- ❖ BfedDC Text Message System provides two-way texting and informational text messages to WIC participants
- ❖ Increases reach and provide convenient and timely breastfeeding support
- ❖ Partners: PreventionPays Text Service, DC Local WIC Agencies, Santa Barbara, CA WIC, The George Washington University, Catholic University



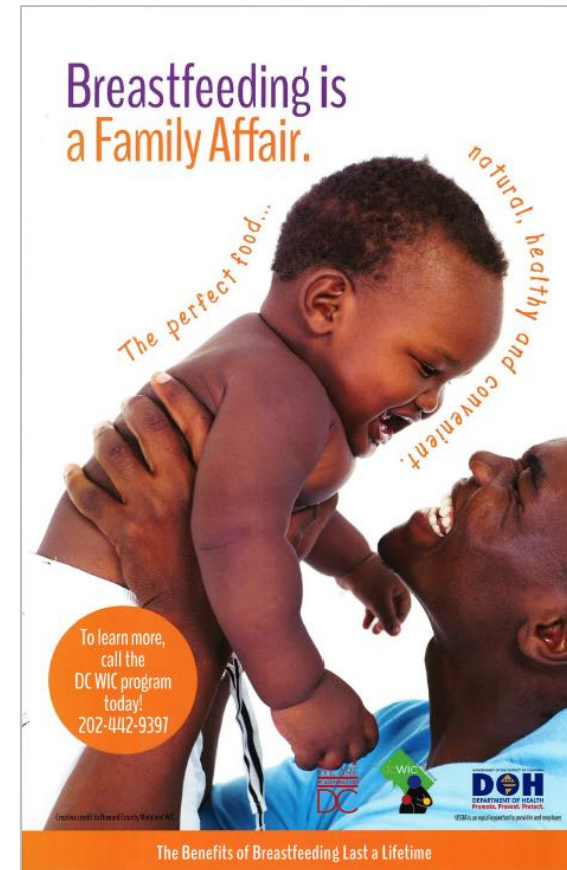
Lactation Support App

- ❖ Pacify app provides 24 hour access to breastfeeding support from an IBCLC
- ❖ IBCLC can address issues outside of PC scope of practice
- ❖ Partners: Pacify, Mary's Center WIC, DC Breastfeeding Coalition, Virginia WIC



Breastfeeding Campaign

- ❖ “Breastfeeding is a Family Affair” campaign launched July 1, 2016 on Pandora Radio
- ❖ Data tracking provided by Pandora Radio
- ❖ Partners: Pandora Radio, DC WIC, Maryland WIC (Howard County)



Tips and Strategies for Collaboration

- ❖ Recruit organizations with a common goal
- ❖ Build mutually-beneficial relationships
- ❖ Identify strengths
- ❖ Embrace innovation

