

Manual: General of Vitalité Health Network

Title:	BABY-FRIENDLY INITIATIVE (BFI)	No.: GEN.3.80.40
Section:	3. Patient Care	Effective date: 2023-11-09
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PURPOSE

1. Create, support and maintain conditions and environments favourable to breastfeeding, in collaboration with the breastfeeding persons, families and communities.
2. Promote, protect and support breastfeeding so that it becomes the cultural norm with respect to feeding newborns and young children.
3. Promote the importance of human milk to the health of persons who are breastfeeding and children.
4. Help families make informed decisions about infant feeding.
5. Respect and support all families, regardless of how they decide to feed their babies.
6. Apply the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding set out in the document *Baby-Friendly Initiative Implementation Guideline* of the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada, 2021.
7. Obtain and maintain the *Baby-Friendly* designation.

DEFINITIONS

The International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes and subsequent relevant World Health Assembly resolutions: A series of recommendations intended to regulate the marketing of breastmilk substitutes, feeding bottles and teats.

The Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI): A quality improvement framework designed to promote, protect and support breastfeeding in hospitals as well as community health services.

Informed decision-making: A process by which pregnant persons and families receive evidence-informed information and support to make infant feeding decisions, which include:

- The opportunity for pregnant persons to discuss their concerns;
- The importance of breastfeeding for babies, mothers/birthing parents, families and communities;
- The health consequences of not breastfeeding for babies and mothers/birthing parents;
- The effects and cost of human milk substitutes;
- The difficulty of reversing decisions once breastfeeding is stopped.

POLICY

1. The Network's employees, physicians, volunteers and students must:
 - 1.1 Promote the recommendations of the Public Health Agency of Canada, Health Canada and the World Health Organization, which are to exclusively breastfeed babies from birth to six months and to continue breastfeeding until the age of two years or more after solid foods are introduced;
 - 1.2 Know that the ten steps are designed to protect, encourage and support breastfeeding;
 - 1.3 Respect and support all families, regardless of how they decide to feed their babies.
2. Further to the New Brunswick Department of Health's Breastfeeding Policy Statement (2018), the Network's facilities and departments shall take steps towards achieving the *Baby-Friendly Initiative* designation in accordance with the *Baby-Friendly Initiative Implementation Guideline*.
3. Management staff must create a workplace that is favourable to breastfeeding. Managers must work with employees who are breastfeeding to determine mutually acceptable work hours, assignments and breaks that support breastfeeding practices and that are consistent with collective agreements (union contracts) and other workplace policies.

PROCEDURE

1. The Network's employees, physicians, volunteers and students care for families in accordance with the steps set out in the document *Baby-Friendly Initiative Implementation Guideline*.

Critical Management Procedures:

- 1.1 **Step 1a.** Comply with the [International Code](#) of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes and relevant World Health Assembly resolutions;
Step 1b. Have a written infant feeding policy that is routinely communicated to all staff, pregnant women/persons and parents;
Step 1c. Establish ongoing BFI monitoring and data-management systems.
- 1.2 **Step 2:** Ensure that staff have the competencies (knowledge, attitudes and skills) necessary to support mothers to meet their infant feeding goals.

Key Clinical Practices:

- 1.3 **Step 3.** Discuss the importance of breastfeeding with pregnant women/persons and their families;
- 1.4 **Step 4.** Facilitate immediate and uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact at birth. Support mothers to respond to the infant's cues to initiate breastfeeding as soon as possible after birth;
- 1.5 **Step 5.** Support mothers/parents to initiate and maintain breastfeeding and manage common difficulties;
- 1.6 **Step 6:** Support mothers to exclusively breastfeed for the first six months, unless breast-milk substitutes are medically indicated;
- 1.7 **Step 7:** Promote and support mother-infant togetherness;

- 1.8 **Step 8.** Encourage responsive, cue-based feeding for infants. Encourage sustained breastfeeding beyond six months with appropriate introduction of complementary foods;
 - 1.9 **Step 9:** Discuss the use and effects of feeding bottles, artificial nipples and pacifiers with parents.
 - 1.10 **Step 10:** Provide a seamless transition between the services provided by the hospital, community health services and peer-support programs.
2. In order for the Network's employees, physicians, volunteers and students to have the knowledge and competencies needed to implement the policy, they are oriented to the policy by completing the online learning module *BFI – Policy Orientation*.
 3. The implementation of this policy is evaluated regularly by BFI committees and working groups through:
 - Surveys administered to staff and families;
 - Record audits;
 - Provincial Baby-Friendly Initiative Report.
 4. Employees who are returning to work and who wish to continue breastfeeding:
 - Discuss breastfeeding at work with their immediate supervisor before returning to work;
 - Develop a plan around breaks for breastfeeding or expressing breastmilk in the workplace;
 - Are responsible for labelling and storing their containers of expressed breastmilk.
 5. Management provides support, spaces and settings favourable to breastfeeding.

ADDITIONAL RELEVANT INFORMATION

1. Not all individuals who give birth to a child or provide it with human milk identify as women. In this policy, the words "mothers" and "women" are used interchangeably to be consistent with scientific studies. However, in your interventions and meetings with families, we advise you to choose the terms that they are most comfortable with.
2. For more information on the Baby-Friendly Initiative Implementation Guideline, visit the website of the [Breastfeeding Committee for Canada](#).
3. For more information on the importance of breastfeeding and ways to support mothers and families, refer to [Infant and Young Child Feeding of the WHO](#).
4. Support and understanding are essential to creating a workplace favourable to breastfeeding for employees. For more information, please see **Appendix GEN.3.80.40 (1) Creating a Workplace Favourable to Breastfeeding**.

REFERENCES

1. Comité canadien pour l'allaitement (2021). Lignes directrices pour la mise en œuvre de l'Initiative Amis des bébés. Consultation le 2023-01-25.
2. Gouvernement du Nouveau-Brunswick. [Énoncé de politique sur l'allaitement maternel du ministère de la Santé du Nouveau-Brunswick](#). Consultation le 2019-09-20.

3. IWK Health Centre and Nova Scotia Health Authority. [Infant Feeding Policy](#). Consultation le 2019-08-02.
4. Santé publique d'Ottawa. Entreprises favorables à l'allaitement : Une trousse d'outils pour le soutien à l'action. www.alimentationjuste.ca/efa. Consultation le 2023-01-25.
5. Ontario Public Health Association (2008). Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace. <https://opha.on.ca/OPHA/media/Resources/Resource%20Documents/BreastfeedingFriendlyWorkplace-Sep08.pdf?ext=.pdf>. Consultation le 2023-01-25
6. Hong Kong Department of Health (2015). Establishing Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace. The Employer's Guide. <https://www.fhs.gov.hk/english/breastfeeding/30031.pdf>. Consultation le 2023-01-25

Supersedes:	Zone 1: _____	Zone 5: _____
Vitalité: <u>GEN.4.70.30</u>	Zone 4: _____	Zone 6: _____

Creating a Workplace Favourable to Breastfeeding

Spaces and settings favourable to breastfeeding

To breastfeed or express their breastmilk at work, a breastfeeding person needs:

- A clean, comfortable and private space;
- A comfortable chair, if possible with supportive arms;
- Appropriate signage (e.g. Room in Use) to enhance privacy;
- Space to change the baby;
- Proximity to handwashing facilities;
- Proximity to refrigeration facilities (an insulated bag or cooler with an ice pack is a safe alternative).

Here are a few ways of helping a co-worker who is breastfeeding to feel at ease;

- Talk to them in a pleasant way.
- Ask them questions about their baby;
- Be comfortable discussing breastfeeding;
- Offer to help with their duties. Ask how you can help them continue breastfeeding at work;
- Congratulate them on their gesture and their choice to continue breastfeeding;
- Remind them that the right to accommodation in the workplace is guaranteed by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Here are a few ways of helping someone who is breastfeeding who presents in your workplace and who needs to breastfeed their baby:

- Ask the person with the baby where they would like to sit. Allow them to choose a place where they feel comfortable breastfeeding their child, if they choose to do so;
- Talk to them in a pleasant way. Ask them questions about their baby;
- Maintain eye contact with someone who is breastfeeding; this shows that you are not embarrassed and that you are supporting them;
- If a client demonstrates embarrassment at someone breastfeeding in public:
 - Explain that this workplace is favourable to breastfeeding that it is our policy to support breastfeeding;
 - Remind them that the right to breastfeed anywhere, anytime is protected by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*;
 - Offer the client in question another seat rather than moving the person who is breastfeeding. This is consistent with the fact that breastfeeding is a right.

Please refrain from asking someone who is breastfeeding their baby to do so in the toilet/washroom. This is unpleasant, and most persons who are breastfeeding will find this upsetting and offensive.