

<p style="text-align: center;">Nutrition Services Department of State Health Services</p>

Effective October 1, 2015

Policy No. BF:03.0

Breastfeeding Peer Counselor and Peer Dad

Purpose

To ensure that Breastfeeding Peer Counselors and Peer Dads are qualified, trained, and perform appropriate duties.

Authority

USDA Loving Support grant; State Policy

Policy

Local agencies (LAs) shall employ Breastfeeding Peer Counselors as paraprofessionals to increase breastfeeding rates by use of peer influence and to assist in breastfeeding counseling in normal breastfeeding situations. Local agencies (LAs) may also employ Breastfeeding Peer Dads as paraprofessionals to increase breastfeeding rates by use of peer influence and to assist in promoting and educating fathers about breastfeeding.

Definitions

Paraprofessional – Those without extended professional training in health, nutrition or the clinical management of breastfeeding who are selected from the group to be served and are trained and given ongoing supervision to provide a basic service or function. Paraprofessionals provide specific tasks within a defined scope of practice.

Procedures

- I. Breastfeeding (BF) Peer Counselors (PCs) and Peer Dads (PDs) shall be trained and work under the supervision of the LA Breastfeeding Coordinator. BF PCs shall be available to work outside regular clinic hours and outside the WIC clinic.

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- II. When recruiting BF PCs LAs shall choose mothers who:
 - A. are receiving WIC or have received WIC;
 - B. have successfully breastfed or expressed breastmilk for at least one baby;
 - C. have the ability to work outside of regular clinic hours and outside of the WIC clinic.
- III. When recruiting BF PDs LAs shall choose fathers:
 - A. Whose child or children are receiving WIC or have received WIC;
 - B. Who have supported their spouse/partners to successfully breastfeed or to receive expressed breastmilk;
- IV. BF PCs and PDs shall be trained in accordance with SA-designated initial PC training prior to working with participants and shall complete other training requirements according to policy TR: 3.0.
 - A. Peer counselors and peer dads shall have monthly meetings and receive monthly in-services on breastfeeding topics. If it is difficult to bring your staff together, monthly in-services can be conducted by conference call.
 - B. Documentation of PC and PD training shall be kept on file at the LA for review.
- V. Breastfeeding Peer Counselors shall perform any or all of the following duties:
 - A. Teach classes (or assist in teaching classes) on the advantages of breastfeeding and the management of normal breastfeeding experiences.
 - B. Distribute breastfeeding information and promote breastfeeding in the clinic waiting area.
 - C. Provide information and promote breastfeeding to WIC participants.

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- D. Develop a rapport with moms and assist them in developing breastfeeding goals and strategies.
 - E. Address specific concerns of expectant mothers. Correct misinformation which may prevent a pregnant woman from breastfeeding.
 - F. Share motivational materials with pregnant participants.
 - G. Counsel pregnant and breastfeeding mothers on a one-to-one basis to help new mothers avoid common breastfeeding problems.
 - H. Support women during a normal breastfeeding experience. Identify breastfeeding experiences that are not the norm and make an immediate, appropriate referral.
 - I. Counsel new mothers in the hospital.
 - J. Counsel over the telephone. Follow-up if necessary.
 - K. Document counseling encounters.
 - L. Provide support and information to breastfeeding mothers who may need help transitioning into being away from their baby for work, school, or other reasons so that they can continue breastfeeding.
 - M. Prepare breastfeeding motivational or informational bulletin boards in the clinic.
 - N. Teach use, cleaning, and assembly of breast pumps and expression and storage of human milk.
- VI. Breastfeeding Peer Dads shall perform any or all of the following duties:

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- A. Teach classes (or assist in teaching classes) on the advantages of breastfeeding and the management of normal breastfeeding experiences.
 - B. Distribute breastfeeding information and promote breastfeeding in the clinic waiting area.
 - C. Provide information and promote breastfeeding to WIC participants.
 - D. Develop a rapport with dads and assist them in developing skills and strategies to support partner breastfeeding goals.
 - E. Address specific concerns of expectant fathers. Correct misinformation which may prevent the mother from breastfeeding.
 - F. Share motivational materials with dads.
 - G. Counsel fathers on a one-to-one basis to help new fathers support breastfeeding mothers and avoid common breastfeeding problems.
 - H. Counsel over the telephone. Follow-up if necessary.
 - I. Document counseling encounters.
 - J. Prepare breastfeeding motivational or informational bulletin boards in the clinic.
- VII. Breastfeeding Peer Counselors and Peer Dads shall make immediate referrals according to the LA's established referral system when they encounter:
- A. Breastfeeding problems outside of their scope of practice;
 - B. Breastfeeding problems that are not resolved within 24 hours of the Peer Counselor's intervention; or
 - C. Problems in an area other than breastfeeding.