Step 10: Breastfeeding Support after Discharge

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Step 10: Objectives

At the end of this 45 minute session, the participant will be able to:

— Create a system of breastfeeding follow-up support for mothers who are discharged from your birthing facility

— Develop a network of support for breastfeeding mothers based upon available resources in their own communities
**STEP 10: Foster establishment of breastfeeding support & refer mothers to them on discharge**

- Discuss plans with mothers who are close to discharge for how they will feed their babies at home

- Provide written discharge information for mothers that reviews:
  - How and where to find help on feeding their infants if they have questions or need assistance after they return home, including information on how to contact:
    - Breastfeeding support groups
    - Peer counselors
    - Other community health services
  - The importance of exclusive breastfeeding for ~ 6 months
STEP 10: Foster establishment of breastfeeding support & refer mothers to them on discharge

- Foster establishment of and/or coordinate with mother support groups & other community services to provide support to mothers on feeding their babies after discharge

- Develop a system of follow-up support for mothers after they are discharged especially if no adequate source of support is available for referral. Follow-up support may include:
  - Early postnatal or lactation clinic check-ups
  - Home visits
  - Routine postpartum follow-up telephone calls
  - Telephone help line

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STEP 10: Foster establishment of breastfeeding support & refer mothers to them on discharge

- Refer mothers for help with feeding to the following follow-up supports in their community, as available:
  - Breastfeeding support groups (e.g., La Leche League)
  - Community lactation clinics
  - Home health services
  - Peer counselors
  - WIC
  - Your facility’s system of follow-up support (e.g., telephone help line, lactation clinic)
**STEP 10: Foster establishment of breastfeeding support & refer mothers to them on discharge**

- Encourage mothers to see a health care worker soon after discharge who can assess breastfeeding and provide any needed support
  - Follow-up should occur within 2-5 days after birth and again during the 2nd week
  - Options for follow-up: Pediatrician, family physician, visiting nurse, or other skilled breastfeeding support person in the community

- Coordinate activities with the WIC program and/or other community services that offer peer support and/or counselors
Step 10: The Evidence

- **Combined lay + professional BF support:**
  $\uparrow$BF duration and exclusivity

- **Antenatal + postnatal education:**
  $\uparrow$BF exclusivity

- **Trained health visitor program:**
  $\downarrow$BF cessation in 1st 6 months

- **Proactive prenatal/postnatal telephone support:**
  $\uparrow$BF duration + exclusivity

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References


• Murray, et al. Hospital practices that increase breastfeeding duration: Results from a population-based study. *Birth.* 2007;34:202-211.


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