

A Tool to Evaluate Your Hospital's Breastfeeding Policy

Evaluation Criteria	Yes	No	Suggestions for Improvement
Does the written breastfeeding policy establish breastfeeding as the standard for infant feeding?			
Does the policy address Steps 2 – 10 of the <i>Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding</i>? Step 2: Train all staff in skills necessary to implement policy. Step 3: Inform all pregnant women about the benefits & management of breastfeeding. Step 4: Place all babies (regardless of feeding method) in skin-to-skin contact with their mothers immediately following birth for at least an hour and encourage mothers to recognize when their babies are ready to feed, offering help if needed. Step 5: Show mothers how to breastfeed & how to maintain lactation even if they are separated from their infants, including instruction on technique of hand expression. Step 6: Give infants no food or drink other than breastmilk (e.g., formula, water) unless medically indicated and provide education if mother requests formula in absence of medical indication. Step 7: Practice rooming-in – allow infants to remain together 24 hr/day with no more than 1 hr spent outside of room for medical procedures. Educate mothers regarding benefits of rooming-in for those who request infant spend time in nursery. Step 8: Encourage / allow infants to breastfeed on cue / on demand without limitations on frequency or duration of feedings. Step 9: Give no pacifiers or artificial nipples to breastfeeding infants, and provide education to mothers if they request bottle or pacifier use in absence of medical indication. Step 10: Foster/list available breastfeeding support groups and resources and refer mothers to these upon discharge.			
Does the policy contain specific language that protects breastfeeding by prohibiting the promotion of formula, use of bottle feeding and/or artificial nipples?			
Does the policy reference the <i>International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes</i>?			
Does the policy contain specific language that protects breastfeeding by prohibiting group instruction regarding formula feeding, use of bottles and/or artificial nipples?			
Does the policy prohibit distribution of gift packs with commercial samples, coupons or promotional materials that promote use of formula, bottles and/or artificial nipples to pregnant women and new mothers?			
Is the breastfeeding policy in line with current evidence-based standards?			

NH's Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding: Step by (baby) Step



Adapted from materials developed by Baby-Friendly USA with their permission

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Is a summary of the breastfeeding/infant feeding policy, including the <i>Ten Steps To Successful Breastfeeding</i> , the <i>International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes</i> and subsequent WHA resolutions posted or displayed in all areas of the health facility that serve mothers, infants, and/or children?			
Is the summary of the breastfeeding/infant feeding policy posted in languages and written with wording most commonly understood by mothers and staff?			
Is there a mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of the policy?			
Are all policies or protocols related to breastfeeding and infant feeding in line with current evidence-based standards?			
Do all areas of the facility that interact with childbearing women and children have language in their policies about protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding?			
Are there procedures in place to orient new staff to the breastfeeding/infant feeding policy?			
Does health care staff refer to the policy when needed?			

