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Baby friendly health initiative coordinators meeting: A snapshot

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Baby friendly health initiative coordinators meeting: A snapshot

Abstract

Supporting, protecting and promoting breastfeeding is one of our midwifery responsibilities. Midwives, child and family nurses, lactation consultants and other health professionals across the globe are working hard to fulfill this responsibility for women and children in different communities. This year we had the Baby Friendly Health Initiative (BFHI) Coordinators' Network Meeting in the Netherlands with one or two representatives of 25 countries attending in person and 8 countries attending online. The representatives at this BFHI coordinators meeting were mainly from developed countries. We were privileged to represent ACM BFHI at this international network meeting. This article takes you with us on our journey in the Netherlands, and includes important snapshots on what we learned from the others.

Keywords

friendly, baby, health, initiative, coordinators, meeting:, snapshot

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Clinical

Baby Friendly Health Initiative Coordinators Meeting: A snapshot

Shahla Meedya and Rosetta Boyd, ACM BFHI advisory committee members, Midwives

Supporting, protecting and promoting breastfeeding is one of our midwifery responsibilities. Midwives, child and family nurses, lactation consultants and other health professionals across the globe are working hard to fulfill this responsibility for women and children in different communities. This year we had the Baby Friendly Health Initiative (BFHI) Coordinators' Network Meeting in the Netherlands with one or two representatives of 25 countries attending in person and 8 countries attending online. The representatives at this BFHI coordinators meeting were mainly from developed countries. We were privileged to represent ACM BFHI at this international network meeting. This article takes you with us on our journey in the Netherlands, and includes important snapshots on what we learned from the others.

On our way to the venue, the beauty of the green lands with so many windmills and bicycles in each station shaped our memory about this country. The first two days of the meeting was focused on the new guidelines that have been developed based on evidence. These were presented by WHO and UNICEF representatives. The main changes are:

- a) grouping the steps into critical management procedures and key clinical practices (four critical management procedures includes three subgroups in Step 1 and Step 2; and the eight key clinical practices includes Step 3 to 10);
- b) adding Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes into Step 1;
- c) adding internal monitoring for the key clinical practices into Step 1;
- d) focusing on the assessment of competencies rather than specific curriculum in Step 2;
- e) including preterm and low birth weight newborns explicitly into Step 3, 5, 6 9 and 10;
- f) changing the focus of prohibiting the use of bottles, teats, and pacifiers to the counselling in Step 9; and
- g) changing the role of facilities for follow-up after discharge in Step 10 by recognizing extra forms of discharge support including: primary health-care centres; community health workers; home visitors; breastfeeding clinics; lactation consultants; peer counsellors; and mother-to-mother support groups) (World Health Organization; 2018).

We also discussed our achievements and major challenges. The main challenges were about achieving nation-wide management and ownership with governmental funding,



Shahla Meedya speaking at the BFHI Coordinators Meeting

sustainability in terms of re-accreditation, training staff and the workload of healthcare staff. New Zealand and Taiwan were the only countries that had full funding support from their government. Finally, we discussed the support and challenges that each country may have during the transition to the new guideline. We all agreed that the changes will make the process of accreditation much smoother and easier for both facilities and assessors.

Our priority, as a team of midwives and health professionals who are responsible for supporting and promoting breastfeeding, is to make sure we have a safe transition phase. We have included some primary recommendations to prepare all of us for a smooth transition:

- a) become familiar with Quality Care Network: National Policies Standards of care http://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/documents/quality-care-network-objectives/en/;
- b) access the new BFHI resources available in 5 languages and align with the new BFHI 10 steps: <http://www.who.int/nutrition/bfhi/infographics/en/> ; and

c) take the free e-learning course on the Code: <https://agora.unicef.org/course/info.php?id=12360>

It is time to get together and make the road ready for new mothers and babies.

The future of BFHI is in all of our hands!

References

World Health Organization, (2018). Implementation guidance: protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding in facilities providing maternity and newborn services – the revised Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative. World Health Organization, Geneva. ■



BFHI Coordinators Meeting

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