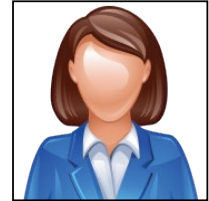


Breastfeeding counselling and the challenges faced by nurses in advocating breastfeeding



Abstract

Breastfeeding gives children the best start in life, it is a powerful life-saver. It is estimated that over one million children die each year from diarrhea, respiratory and other infections because they are not adequately breastfed. Despite this compelling scientific evidence, the health system policies, political commitment to and financial investment in breastfeeding are low. Breastfeeding counseling is an effective public health intervention that provides the support and encouragement that the mother needs to breastfeed successfully, thereby increasing the rates of breastfeeding. Basic breastfeeding counseling skills, enable nurses to give mothers, the support and encouragement that they need to breastfeed successfully. To be an effective breastfeeding counselor, certain professional as well as personal attributes, are needed. Counseling skills must include listening, learning, building confidence giving support and checking understanding. Nurses being the major force have an important role in protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding through initiatives aimed at positive attitudes, enhanced education and advocacy. Unfortunately, there are many barriers and obstacles in advocating breastfeeding by nurses. These include, Administrative challenges like lack of policies in the hospital about breastfeeding, absence of baby friendly hospital initiative, lack of autonomy, lack of power to make decisions, Challenges due to influence of formula marketing companies, Challenges in functioning of nurses like lack of knowledge, time and assertiveness, work overload, communication problems & Challenges arising from the family/friends, their interference and pressure, myths related to breastfeeding, cultural practices enforced. All pregnant women & lactating mothers need accurate information, encouragement & help/assistance to succeed in optimal breastfeeding. All the frontline workers & health care providers must acquire the skills in counseling & they need to be supported and empowered to advocate and promote breastfeeding.

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Biography

Delphina Mahesh Gurav is a Lactation Nurse Practitioner and the Vice Principal of Seva mandal education society's Smt Sunanda Pravin Gambhirchand College of Nursing, Matunga Mumbai. Her Education: GNM, PB BSC, MSC N, LNP, PGDHA and have an Experience of 23years. She has worked in capacity of Primary Nurse, Clinical Instructor, Nurse Manager, Lecturer, Professor, Vice Principal and Lactation Practitioner. Her passionate about bringing positive change in breastfeeding rates. Several research papers presented. She have won several prizes in research paper and poster presentation. Pioneer of Lactation. Meritorious awards for securing first position in Lactation Practitioner programmer.



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