Development of Breastfeeding Education Protocol and Educational Content at University of Washington Medical Center

Mya Kwon, UW Nutritional Sciences Program, MPH-Nutrition Student & Dietetic Intern

Background & Issue

With clear scientific evidence supporting benefits of breastfeeding, UWMC Lactation Services worked to receive designation as a “Baby Friendly Hospital” in 2009 from the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI), a global initiative by the UNICEF and WHO, by fulfilling the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, which serve as guidelines to create the optimal environment for early initiation and continued success of breastfeeding in all newborns. However, as UWMC is up for re-evaluation by BFHI in 2014, UWMC must meet the additional standards regarding prenatal breastfeeding education in order to be re-designated as a Baby Friendly Hospital and maintain its high-quality patient care for the maternal and infant population.

Project Goals & Objectives

To develop a patient education plan and patient education material to supplement the UWMC Infant Feeding Policy and meet the prenatal breastfeeding education standards documented as Step 3 of the UNICEF/WHO Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding guidelines by:

- Identifying education needs of prenatal patients in cooperation from UW Medicine-associated prenatal clinics
- Designing a protocol for implementing uniform breastfeeding education in all prenatal patients going through care from the UW Medicine network
- Designing methods for evaluating learning of prenatal breastfeeding education in compliance with BFHI standards
- Developing breastfeeding education materials that include the required breastfeeding topics from the UNICEF/WHO Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative

Methods

- Review of UNICEF/WHO guidelines and additional literature review and develop new “UWMC Breastfeeding Education Plan” to meet BFHI standards to qualify as a Baby Friendly Hospital
- E-mail survey to all UWMC associated prenatal clinics to identify patient education needs
- Review of current UWMC breastfeeding education materials and additional outside resources to determine education topic needs
- Development of an all-inclusive breastfeeding education material to be used as supplement teaching material in 1:1 education sessions and in digital format on UWMC Lactation Services website

Anticipated Impact

- All prenatal patients from UWMC associated clinics will receive comprehensive breastfeeding education
- Mothers will be able to make more informed choices on breastfeeding, optimally leading to increased breastfeeding rates
- Practitioners can provide effective breastfeeding education with step-by-step protocol and all-inclusive education material
- UWMC will meet prenatal education requirements and become re-designated as a Baby Friendly Hospital

Results: Deliverables

1. Written protocol: “UWMC Breastfeeding Education Plan for Prenatal Women-Prenatal Clinics”

- Supplements UWMC’s Infant Feeding Policy and qualifies for Step 3 of UNICEF/WHO Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding guidelines
- Includes the protocol and curriculum for prenatal breastfeeding education to be offered to all pregnant women at the UWMC-associated prenatal clinics
- Outlines the three-step breastfeeding education implementation protocol
  1) Assessment stage: Assessment of patient’s prior knowledge/experience and learning readiness
  2) Education stage: Provide education on all required topics by the BFHI Guidelines
  3) Evaluation stage: Evaluate patient’s learning according to BFHI evaluation criteria


- Includes all key breastfeeding topics as required by BFHI
  - Benefits of breastfeeding
  - Importance of exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months
  - Early initiation of breastfeeding
  - Benefits of early skin-to-skin contact
  - Rooming-in on a 24 hour basis
  - Baby-led feeding
  - Frequency of feeding and establishing supply
  - Benefits of continued breastfeeding after intro of solid foods
  - Focuses on key points in timeline format for easy comprehension

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