



# SEOCHC Infant Feeding Policy

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## **Infant Feeding Policy:**

**Purpose:** South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre (SEOCHC) recognizes the importance of breastfeeding for both mother and baby. We endeavour to protect and support breastfeeding and will ensure that each mother receives clear and evidence-based information to make an informed infant feeding decision and will be supported in that decision.

### **Scope:**

Applies to all staff, health care providers, students, and volunteers of SEOCHC who have contact with mother and their infants.

### **Background:**

Our policy is based on guidelines of the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (BCC): [\*The BFI 10 Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicators for Hospitals and Community Health Services\*](#). This policy is designed to ensure good professional practice within the scope of the [\*Family Centred Maternity and Newborn Care: National Guidelines \(Health Canada, 2000b\)\*](#) and the [\*RNAO's Best Practice Guidelines for Breastfeeding, 2018\*](#). SEOCHC adheres to the [\*WHO International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes.\*](#)

### **Terms:**

We will use the term "infant formula" which is "artificial human milk substitute".

### **Procedure:**

1. Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all staff, health care providers and volunteers.
  - a. This policy will be communicated to all staff, healthcare providers, and volunteers.
  - b. All staff will receive information regarding our policy at orientation (appropriate to their roles and responsibilities within the Centre).
  - c. Information on the policy (a Summary or Pledge) is available in a number of languages and displayed throughout the Centre.
  - d. All staff may access the full Infant Feeding Policy on the Intranet.
  - e. The Family Friendly Policy (or Pledge) is displayed in all waiting areas and all areas where clients are served.

**2. Ensure all staff, health care providers and volunteers have the knowledge and skills necessary to implement the infant feeding policy.**



- a) All staff and students will receive education and training in breastfeeding management at a level appropriate to their role. New staff will receive training within six months of commencing employment.
- b) All health care providers will support breastfeeding women, providing information to help prevent problems from occurring and helping them to overcome related problems should they exist.
- c) New clinic staff working with breastfeeding women will get the opportunity to do the RNAO breastfeeding modules (covering all topics mentioned in the 20 hour BFI course for health care providers) within six months of commencing employment including a four hour practicum to observe the lactation consultant.
- d) The responsibility for education and training lies with the Human Resources Officer and the staff supervisor.
- e) Documentation will include records (tracking sheet with dates) of orientation of new employees to breastfeeding policy and practices along with records of attendance of ongoing competency.

### **3. Inform pregnant women and their families about the importance and process of breastfeeding.**

- a. Every effort will be made to ensure that all pregnant women are aware of the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life and of the potential health risks of breast milk substitutes.
- b. All pregnant women who have contact with the Community Health Centre will be given an opportunity to discuss infant feeding on a one to one basis with a health care provider.
- c. Prenatal education, when provided by the CHC will include information to help women and their families make an informed decision about infant feeding. The normal course of breastfeeding and the common experiences they may encounter will also be included. The aim is to give women confidence in their ability to breastfeed.
- d. All materials and teaching will reflect "The revised BFI Ten Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicators for Hospitals and Community Health Services" [The revised BFI Ten Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicators for Hospitals and Community Health Services](#)
- e. Women who have made an informed decision not to breastfeed will receive resources on formula feeding that is current, appropriate and separate from breastfeeding information. Whoever is issuing the information is also available to elaborate and explain if questions arise.

### **4. Place babies in uninterrupted safe skin- to- skin contact with their mothers immediately following birth for at least an hour or until completion of the first feeding or as long as the mother wishes. Encourage mothers to recognize when their babies are ready to feed, offering help as needed.**