

Peer Support Breastfeeding Programs



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Introduction

- In the dynamic landscape of 21st-century healthcare, significant progress has been made in women's health. Parents embark on the journey of parenthood shortly after hospital release, equipped with diverse parenting skills.
- Breastfeeding emerges as a vital component of human development, providing essential nutrition and fostering optimal growth while serving as a pivotal bonding time for mothers and their infants. Breastfeeding can be challenging, leading to unmet expectations and negative emotions.
- Breastfeeding support groups (BSGs) have become valuable resources, offering mothers confidence, support, and encouragement during their breastfeeding journey.
- Spencer Hospital partnered with us for this evidence-based project.

Purpose

- Through an evidence-based project partnership, we identified effective strategies for providing support to breastfeeding mothers in order to foster a sense of encouragement and community to help women achieve their breastfeeding goals and improve breastfeeding duration rates.
- Contribute valuable evidence-based research that will contribute insights to enhance breastfeeding support systems at Spencer Hospital and the communities they serve.

Clinical Question

Regarding breastfeeding mothers, what is the effect of a peer support group on breastfeeding longevity versus moms who are not involved in a support group within one year of breastfeeding?

Methodology

A literature review was done between August 2023 and November 2023 utilizing the following key search terms related to peer-support breastfeeding programs:

- Breastfeeding, sustaining, support group, breastfeeding difficulty, breastfeeding longevity, lactation, breastfeeding exclusivity, prelacteal feeding

The Johns Hopkins Appraisal system identified ten contributing research reports from CINAHL and PubMed.



Project Goal

Explore impact of BSGs on maternal well-being, breastfeeding success, and overall community support.

Provide insight to shape strategies that will enhance the available support structure for breastfeeding mothers who give birth at the Spencer Hospital.

Our team was interested in existing evidence-based peer support groups for breastfeeding moms and the influence of key factors such as:

- Maternal perception of breastfeeding
- Maternal confidence in sustaining breastfeeding
- Ability of mothers to achieve personal breastfeeding goals

Results

- Breastfeeding peer support groups offer significant benefits as a valuable resource for fostering maternal support and sustaining longevity of breastfeeding.
- Healthcare providers have a pivotal role in leading BSGs.
- Peer support has a profound impact on breastfeeding duration by creating a supportive environment for mothers.

Conclusion

Our research affirms the significant benefits of breastfeeding peer support groups as a valuable resource for fostering maternal support and promoting the sustained longevity of breastfeeding experiences. We envision ongoing feedback within BSGs to progressively improve their efficacy. Through BSG implementation at Spencer Hospital, our collective hope is to empower mothers and contribute to their enduring success in achieving breastfeeding longevity.

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