



AT-A-GLANCE

With breastfeeding initiation and duration rates lower in low-income and Black women in Peoria, health system partners are teaming up to work to improve support for breastfeeding in the region. With collaboration spurred by the Illinois State Physical Activity and Nutrition (ISPAN) program, the Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (ICAAP) brought together champions at two hospital systems in Peoria to begin regular discussions to improve continuity of care for breastfeeding. The early results of the collaboration are promising for improved breastfeeding support.

PUBLIC HEALTH CHALLENGE

While about 88.2% of babies born in 2017 in Illinois were ever breastfed, only 60.7% were still breastfeeding at 12 weeks, with only 34.2% of babies being exclusively breastfed at 12 weeks. According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in Illinois in 2015, only 19.5% of babies were exclusively breastfed for 6 months, which is recommended by the American Academies of Pediatrics. Disparities in breastfeeding initiation and duration rates persist for low-income women, Black women, and women living in rural areas. In Central Illinois, 75% of babies born in the region are ever breastfed. For low-income women (as indicated by those who qualify for the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) nutrition program), that rate drops to 64%, with only 46% of babies exclusively breastfed during in their first few days of life at the hospital. A statewide environmental scan conducted as part of the ISPAN program found that inconsistent information across health care and breastfeeding support providers, inadequate support from healthcare providers and worksites, and lack of access to supportive services were major barriers to breastfeeding in the Central Illinois region.

APPROACH

As ISPAN partners, ICAAP worked to identify local breastfeeding champions in Peoria, Illinois to promote policy, process and procedure changes that could improve the continuity of care and community support for breastfeeding in the region. Two ICAAP champions - Beth Seidel, an International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant at Unity Point-Methodist Hospital, and Dr. Shelly Shallat, the Medical Director of the newborn nursery at OSF Healthcare - came together with the Central Illinois Breastfeeding Task Force, the Peoria City/County Health Department, Heartland Armstrong Federally Qualified Health Center, and the University of Illinois College of Medicine to facilitate change. Dr. Shallat and Ms. Seidel have pulled together teams from both hospitals for monthly meetings to align work and promote better support for breastfeeding. This is the first time the two health systems have collaborated to achieve a common goal.



ISPAN is made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in collaboration with the Illinois Alliance to Prevent Obesity, administered by the Illinois Public Health Institute





“Supporting mothers and babies to be successful with breastfeeding is of the utmost importance. Connection with families during all stages of life and across different environments provides multiple opportunities to work together. Partnering to improve the health of our community has been an inspirational, positive experience. We are all looking forward to what the next few years will bring.”

-Dr. Shelly Shallat, Medical Director of Newborn Nursery, Newborn Hospitalist, OSF Healthcare Children’s Hospital of Illinois



Impact

Because of the collaborative approach, several important changes are in the works in Peoria to improve the quality of care for breastfeeding:

- OSF Healthcare is working to improve its policy around hypoglycemia screening and treatment and to promote “rooming-in,” meaning keeping babies close to moms to support breastfeeding.
- An infant feeding report in the Epic electronic health records system was developed at one health system and is being shared with the other and area Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) to explore whether they can create continuity in data across systems.
- The hospitals, local WIC agency and area FQHCs are all working to adopt the same prenatal education program and materials- Ready, Set, BABY - to provide common, evidence-based messaging across systems.
- Residents in the University of Illinois College of Medicine Pediatric Residency Program rotating through OSF Healthcare were provided with updated training on how best to support breastfeeding. This training will be held annually for new residents.

WHAT’S NEXT

While each entity involved in the collaborative will continue to establish new policies and processes that support breastfeeding, the collaboration between entities will be key to improving continuity of care for breastfeeding support in Peoria. The two health systems plan to continue meeting monthly, and work to implement a shared action plan for breastfeeding support in the region. This plan will prioritize pediatric providers who regularly see moms and babies in the early months post-partum, when breastfeeding support is strongly needed.

ⁱ Illinois Department of Public Health (2017). 2017 Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) Detailed Data Tables: Table 50 Breastfeeding. Retrieved October 15, 2019 from <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/data-statistics/prams/datatables-2017>.

ⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2018). Breastfeeding report card: United States, 2018. Retrieved October 20, 2019 from <https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/2018breastfeedingreportcard.pdf>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Breastfeeding Progress in Illinois: Illinois Breastfeeding Blueprint Project PowerPoint Presentation (May 2, 2017).

^{iv} Newborn Breastfeeding Rates, Illinois Residents 2016-2017 Data Source: Birth Certificates (all years final data) Last updated: 3/26/2019. Retrieved April 2019 from <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/wic/FY2016-BFDLA-Report.pdf>.

ABOUT ISPAN

ISPAN is a five-year, \$4.6 million initiative to implement physical activity and nutrition interventions designed to make it easier for Illinoisans to live the healthiest lives possible, especially in low-income, rural, and minority communities that have been the hardest hit by chronic diseases like type 2 diabetes and heart disease. With funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Illinois Public Health Institute is collaborating with the Illinois Department of Public Health, local health departments in three regions of the state, and a unified coalition of organizations from multiple sectors to tackle the root causes of obesity.

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