

Medications and Mothers' Milk: Breastfeeding Promotion and Outreach to Health Care Providers and Pharmacists

People involved:

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Background: A primary public health initiative in Missoula is to improve initiation, duration and rates of exclusive breastfeeding. MCCHD, CMC staff (maternity, lactation and NICU), UM School of Pharmacy, local pharmacists and Health Care Providers (HCP), Missoula Breastfeeding Coalition and others collaborate in the norming of breastfeeding.

Goal: Our goal is to prevent the unnecessary discontinuation of exclusive breastfeeding caused by misinformation provided by HCP and RPH. Mothers report being advised to discontinue breastfeeding, or “pump and dump” breastmilk while taking various prescription drugs, e.g. anti-depressants, antibiotics and pain medications.

Our intention is to encourage professionals to evaluate the risk vs. benefit issues before routinely recommending d/c of lactation due to medication use. We validated credibility of the Thomas Hale text through the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, the United States Breastfeeding Committee.

Methods:

Materials creation:

- Memorandum of Agreement to be signed by text recipients
- Brochure ***“Medications; Alcohol, Tobacco and Medication Use While Breastfeeding”***
- Quiz on use of text to review medications for in-services.
- Talking points for use when visiting MDs and pharmacies.

Staff visited selected clinics and pharmacies to discuss breastfeeding promotion collaboration. We negotiated signing the MOA before distributing books, brochures and ***License to Breastfeed*** cards.

Results: We established rapport with clinicians for this and other public health work. Texts were delivered to 50 clinics and pharmacies. One refused the text and wouldn't sign the agreement.