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AUTHORIZATION: Health Communities – Community Health Services Parenting Support Services	DATE ESTABLISHED November 1, 2002	DATE REVISED

REASON FOR POLICY

The following section provides a brief description of breastfeeding support offered to clients by public health nurses.

DEFINITIONS

1. The Role of the Public Health Nurse (PHN)
 - 1.1. Public health nurse's role is to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding in the community. PHN's are a resource for providing breastfeeding education to families, other health care professionals, and communities. The public health nurse contributes to the dynamic process of breastfeeding and the developing relationship between the parents and infant by helping to create, maintain and enhance an environment that is supportive of the breastfeeding relationship.
 - 1.2. The public health nurse helps to build maternal self-esteem by promoting independence, self-care and a sense of competence for breastfeeding families. The public health nurse provides care for breastfeeding families through telephone contacts, office visits, and home visits. Care includes:
 - providing accurate, evidence based information
 - dispelling myths
 - breastfeeding assessment including:
 - identifying problems or potential problems
 - providing appropriate interventions, teaching, and support as outlined in the Breastfeeding Guidelines for Health Care Providers (Canadian Institute of Child Health, 1996) and the accompanying Calgary Health Region Supplement
 - facilitating insight into the possible causes and effects of difficulties
 - supporting the parents' infant feeding plan with empathy and encouragement
 - encouraging the use of public health nurse services such as office visits, telephone consultation, home visits, and Community Breastfeeding Support Services
 - promoting community breastfeeding resources
 - referring, as necessary, to appropriate health care providers.

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- 1.3. The PHN has access to two levels of inservicing to assist her in developing skills necessary for assisting breastfeeding mothers. (see Appendix I for the Breastfeeding Support PHN Learning Objectives and Skills Checklist)

2. The Role of the Public Health Nurse with Certification as a Lactation Consultant
 - 2.1. Public health nurses with certification as lactation consultants are able to provide a comprehensive level of care to breastfeeding mothers through telephone contact, office visits, and home visits. and through the Community Breastfeeding Support Services. They are also able to act as resource persons to other nurses in their Community Health Centres.

3. The Role of the Community Breastfeeding Support Service Lactation Consultant
 - 3.1. The Calgary Health Region believes that certification as an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) enhances the public health nurse's knowledge and skill for supporting breastfeeding mothers and infants experiencing more complex issues. The public health nurses functioning in the role of the Lactation Consultant for the Community Breastfeeding Support Service provide:
 - consistent, evidence based care for families with complex breastfeeding concerns
 - opportunities for other health care professionals to develop expertise in the area of breastfeeding support
 - mutual support for other Lactation Consultants in the region through networking and sharing of resources

 - 3.2. The Lactation Consultants' practice also reflects the Standards of Practice for Lactation Consultants set by the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners. (See Appendix II)

PROCESS

1. Procedure:
 - 1.1 See the Infant and Maternal Assessment Guidelines for assessment and referral guidelines as well as the Community Breastfeeding Support Service Protocol.

REFERRALS

1. Public health nurses may refer to or consult with those nurses with certification as a lactation consultant regarding client breastfeeding problems that are not resolving with the public health nurse's interventions. Whenever possible, the assessment, intervention and

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evaluation of the breastfeeding concern should involve the referring public health nurse. The care plan should be developed with and delivered by the referring public health nurse.

2. Situations involving on-going complex breastfeeding problems that cannot be resolved with the assistance of the PHN should be referred to the Community Breastfeeding Support Service (CBSS) according to protocol.
3. The public health nurse will refer, to physicians, all clients where medical assessment and/or intervention is indicated as outlined in the Appendix 6 of the Quick Reference for Breastfeeding Difficulties, 2000 – Guidelines for Referral and Follow-Up and the Community Breastfeeding Support Services Protocol.
4. Upon client request or when CBSS appointments are not available clients can be informed of the other breastfeeding support services in the community and contact information given or a referral can be made.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Most breastfeeding concerns, especially within the first few weeks after birth, require follow-up within 1-2 days.
2. Follow-up should continue until the concern resolves or until the client is referred for further help. The referring PHN should follow-up with the mother once the health care professional the client was referred to has discharged the client.

DOCUMENTATION

1. Breastfeeding assessment should be documented on the Infant Nutrition\Elimination Assessment form (MI-F 177) and interventions and referrals should be documented on the Progress Notes (form ADMIN-F-646).

CROSS REFERENCE

<i>Subject/Title:</i>	<i>Manual:</i>	<i>Section:</i>
Breastfeeding Guidelines for Health Care Providers	Canadian Institute of Child Health (1996)	
Calgary Health Region Supplement	Canadian Institute of Child Practice Health (1996)	Breastfeeding Content Standards Community Resources Quick Reference for Breastfeeding Difficulties



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ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

1. Video – “Helping a Mother to Breastfeed: No Finer Investment”
2. Video – “The Art of Successful Breastfeeding, A Guide for Health Professionals”
3. Video – “Breast is Best”
4. Lakeview Breastfeeding Clinic Tongue-Tie video