

Becoming Baby-Friendly: Implementing the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative at a Rural Hospital in Southern Illinois



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Introduction/Background

Results & Conclusions

In 1991, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) launched the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI), an international program that promotes the *Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding* (referred to as "the Ten Steps") and the *International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes*. The overall goal of the BFHI is to promote breastfeeding as the optimal source of nutrition for infants, except in cases where specialized formula is medically indicated. The Baby-Friendly designation serves to provide special recognition to hospitals around the world that meet the rigorous BFHI criteria.

The results of this QI project show clear improvements in the examined statistics since implementing the BFHI Ten Steps at SJB. These improvements, in turn, have led to positive outcomes in maternal-newborn care at SJB including improved bonding between mother and infant and increased breastfeeding rates.

Objective & Methods

Future directions include following the percentages of women who continue to breastfeed 6 weeks, 3 months, 6 months and 12 months after delivery. Mothers are encouraged to attend the established breastfeeding support groups at SJB. Given the improvements in providing mothers more education on breastfeeding and more support via breastfeeding support groups, we predict that the percentages of mothers who continue to breastfeed up to 12 months post-partum will increase.

The objectives of this quality improvement project are to examine the statistical outcomes of implementing the Ten Steps at a rural hospital (referred to as "SJB") in Southern Illinois and to achieve the official Baby-Friendly designation at SJB by March 2018. The Baby-Friendly journey at SJB began in 2014, with implementation of the Ten Steps beginning in 2015. This project examines the improvements in breastfeeding statistics at SJB from 2015 through 2018, as the hospital has grown closer to reaching its designation as a Baby-Friendly Hospital. Specific statistics include percentage of, 1) births which successfully initiated skin-to-skin contact between mother and infant immediately after birth for at least 1 hour, 2) infants who successfully initiated breastfeeding within 1 hour of birth, 3) infants who successfully practiced "rooming-in" with mothers, and 4) mothers who received documented breastfeeding education before discharge from the hospital.

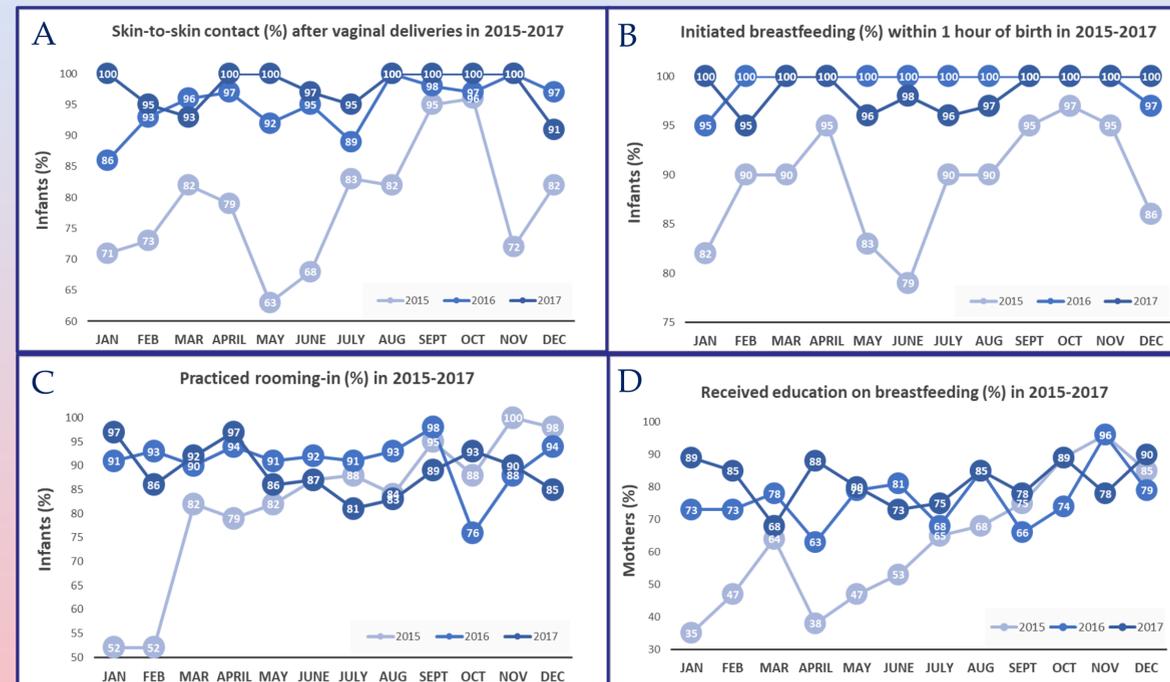


Figure 1. Percentages of infants and mothers at SJB from 2015 through 2017 who, A) initiated skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth for at least 1 hour, B) initiated breastfeeding within 1 hour of birth, C) practiced rooming-in, and D) received documented education on breastfeeding.

- ### 10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding
- The longer a baby is breastfed, the greater the benefit.
- 1 Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health care staff
 - 2 Train all health care staff in skills necessary to implement this policy.
 - 3 Inform all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.
 - 4 Help mothers initiate breastfeeding within an hour of birth.
 - 5 Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation, even if they should be separated from their infants.
 - 6 Give newborn infants no food or drink other than breastmilk, unless medically indicated.
 - 7 Practice "rooming in" by allowing mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day.
 - 8 Encourage breastfeeding on demand (based on infant's feeding cues).
 - 9 Give no artificial teats, pacifiers, dummies, or soothers to breastfeeding infants.
 - 10 Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or birthing center.
- The Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding forms the basis of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, a worldwide breastfeeding quality improvement project created by the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund.

Figure 2. The Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative's Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding [1].

We are currently awaiting the final decision of the BFHI committee in regards to our designation. The pending award as an official Baby-Friendly Hospital will have a positive impact on the local community of SJB and its surrounding region.

References

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2. Saadeh, R. J. (2012). The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative 20 Years On. *Journal of Human Lactation*,28(3), 272-275. doi:10.1177/0890334412446690
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