



The National Authority for the Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI)

**Baby-Friendly Initiative  
Assessment Process & Costs  
for Hospitals, Maternity Facilities  
and Community Health Services**

The process for a hospital, maternity facility or community health service to achieve Baby-Friendly designation is a journey, the milestones of which are outlined below.

1. Facility establishes a Multidisciplinary Breastfeeding Committee
2. Facility conducts the BFI Self-Appraisal Process using the BCC BFI Ten Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicators for Hospitals and Community Health Services including the Appendices
3. BFI Pre-Assessment: Document Review and Site Visit
4. BFI External Assessment
5. BFI Designation
6. Maintaining BFI Designation: self monitoring and interim reports
7. BFI Re-Assessment every 5 years
8. BFI Re-designation

Typically, most hospitals, maternity facilities and community health services (referred to below as the Facility) can expect to spend several years on this journey.

## **Milestones for the BFI Journey**

- 1. Certificate of Intent** – Some provinces/territories (i.e. Ontario, British Columbia and Manitoba) use this certificate as a means of becoming aware of a facility’s interest in the Baby-Friendly Initiative and facilitating communication with the facility regarding provincial resources to help the facility with their Baby-Friendly journey. A Certificate of Intent is issued to the facility when the following requirements are met:
  - The facility has made a decision to use the *BFI 10 Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicators for Hospitals and Community Health Services* to guide and inform practice.
  - The facility submits the name and contact information for a BFI lead to the P/T BFI contact person.
  - The facility establishes a BFI workgroup within the facility.
  
- 2. Certificate of Participation** – Once a facility has met the following requirements they can contact their P/T BFI contact person for a Certificate of Participation (if there is no P/T BFI committee the facility may contact the BCC BFI Assessment Committee):
  - Establish a Multidisciplinary BFI/Breastfeeding Committee including administrators, direct care staff from the facility, and members from the community.
  - Perform a self-assessment using the *BCC BFI Ten Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicators for Hospitals and Community Health Services and Appendices* to assess the degree to which practices align with the Ten Steps and International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes (WHO Code).
  - Develop a work plan to ensure that the BFI Outcome Indicators including the WHO Code will be implemented.
  - Review breastfeeding initiation and duration rates.
  - Assign a contact person who will lead communications with the P/T BFI Committee.

### **3. Capacity Building Visit**

- A facility can request a capacity building visit by contacting their P/T BFI Committee.
- The P/T BFI contact assigns an Assessor or Lead Assessor to visit the facility to provide guidance. The cost of this one day visit includes travel, accommodation (if needed), meals and an honorarium for the Assessor.
- A capacity building visit is optional.

#### **4. BFI Pre-Assessment**

##### **4.1 Readiness for BFI Pre-Assessment**

The following criteria must be met prior to a facility entering into Pre-Assessment:

- Facility self-appraisal has been updated using the BFI Ten Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicators and Appendices.
- The criteria for each Outcome Indicator (and appendices) are complete or very close to completion.
- All documents that are submitted for review must be complete (documents under revision or in a draft state will not be reviewed).
- Breastfeeding surveillance is provided in accordance with the requirements described in Step 6.

##### **4.2 Pre-Assessment Process**

- Pre-Assessment is a two part process: a review of the facility's documents followed by a site visit to the facility.
- The BFI Pre-Assessment is conducted by a BCC certified BFI Lead Assessor, assigned by the BCC BFI Assessment Committee, in collaboration with the P/T BFI contact and the BCC BFI Assessment Committee.
- For educational purposes, additional BCC BFI Assessors and Assessor Candidates may participate in the BFI Pre-Assessment without additional cost to the facility.
- The BFI Pre-Assessment contract and guidelines are outlined in point 6 of this document.

## Part 1: Pre-Assessment Document Review

The facility compiles three copies of documents to be reviewed. Two copies of the documents are submitted to the Assessors listed in the contract. One copy is retained by the facility as a master copy. The following content should be included for document review:

- **Cover letter** including demographics of the facility, prenatal and postpartum services provided, and demographics of the population served in the geographic area.
- **Self- assessment**
  - BCC BFI Ten Steps and WHO Code Outcomes Indicators and Appendices completed as a checklist.
- **Written BFI/Infant feeding policy and any related policies**
  - Full policy, including the date of implementation, signed by the highest authority of the facility.
  - Shortened/posted public policy.
  - Translation into languages most commonly understood (if any).
- **Orientation to the policy**
  - Outline of information provided for orientation of new staff (also includes physicians, midwives, students and volunteers) to the BFI/Infant feeding policy.
- **Staff education**
  - Information provided for staff orientation to the Baby-Friendly Initiative including the WHO Code and related policies.
  - Facility maintains records of staff attendance at orientation
  - A copy of the curriculum or course outline for education provided for all staff who have direct contact with mothers and their babies/children
  - Facility maintains records of all staff who have direct contact with mothers, babies and/or children with the total number of hours of breastfeeding education and how this education has been provided (i.e. independent study, in-service, lactation course etc.). The list should include any supervised clinical instruction. The list of staff may be reviewed during the site visit rather than sent prior to the visit if preferred.
  - Evidence of ongoing education and competency validation based on role.

- **Prenatal education materials**
  - A written curriculum for prenatal classes (in person and/or on-line).
  - A copy of all the educational materials provided to women and their families prenatally.
- **Postpartum education materials**
  - A written curriculum for any parenting classes where infant feeding is discussed.
  - A copy of all the educational materials provided to women and their families regarding infant feeding and related issues (e.g. settling babies, contraception).
- **Data Collection: Breastfeeding surveillance**  
Refer to Appendix 6.3 and 6.4 of the BFI 10 Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicator document.

### **BFI Pre-Assessment Document Review Report**

- The report will include feedback and recommendations to the facility. The report will not include detailed editing and revisions of documents. The written report is submitted by the Lead Assessor to the BCC BFI Assessment Committee within six weeks of receipt of the documents. The facility and the relevant P/T BFI Committee receive a copy of this report from the Lead Assessor. The facility is expected to carefully review the report and utilize the feedback to further facilitate the implementation of the BFI Ten Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicators.
- Readiness for the Pre-Assessment site visit is mutually determined by the Lead Assessor and the facility. The Lead Assessor will liaise with the BCC BFI Assessment Committee and the facility to arrange a BFI Pre-Assessment Site Visit date.

### **Part 2: Pre-Assessment Site Visit**

- The site visit is an intensive, abbreviated evaluation of the facility and an opportunity for the facility and Lead Assessor to determine readiness for an External Assessment.
- The site visit usually requires one day but may be longer depending on the size of the facility.

- The site visit includes detailed discussions with staff and clients and observation of practices within the facility.

### **BFI Pre-Assessment Site Visit Report**

- A written report with feedback and recommendations is submitted by the Lead Assessor to the BCC BFI Assessment Committee within six weeks of the site visit. The facility and the relevant P/T BFI Committee also receive a copy of the report.
- The facility is expected to carefully review the report and utilize the feedback to enhance the implementation of the BFI Ten Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicators.
- If the facility is not ready to move to External Assessment an action plan is requested from the facility. The action plan including timelines should be submitted to the Lead Assessor within 90 days of receipt of the report.
- The P/T BFI Committee will provide information and assistance in formulating a plan and making changes to meet the outstanding criteria whenever possible. In situations where the P/T BFI committee lacks capacity the Lead Assessor will provide guidance to the facility.
- The facility can request a Certificate of Completion by contacting their P/T BFI committee (or contact person). This certificate is valid for one year.
- Following the Pre-Assessment site visit, the Lead Assessor will liaise with the BCC BFI Assessment Committee and the facility to arrange the External Assessment once readiness has been determined.

## **5. External Assessment**

### **5.1 Readiness for BFI External Assessment**

The following criteria must be met prior to a facility entering into an External Assessment:

- All the Pre-Assessment criteria have been met including recent and complete surveillance criteria.
- The facility has informed the Lead Assessor who completed the Pre-Assessment site visit of any changes in service provision.
- The Lead Assessor makes a recommendation for application for External Assessment to the BCC BFI Assessment Committee and the relevant P/T BFI Committee.

## 5.2 External Assessment Process

External Assessment is an extensive assessment of policies and practices to determine whether the criteria defined in the BCC BFI Ten Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicators are being met. The BFI External Assessment Contract and Guidelines are outlined in point 6 of this document.

External Assessment involves:

- Interviews with management, direct care providers, nonclinical staff.
- Interviews with clients.
- Observations of the facility and staff at work.

The External Assessment requires two to five days depending on the size of the facility.

The External Assessment is conducted by an External Assessment Team assigned by the BCC BFI Assessment Committee in collaboration with the P/T BFI Committee.

The team consists of:

- A BCC certified BFI Lead Assessor.
- BCC certified Assessors.
- BCC Assessor Candidates (optional).
- Where possible, the team will be led by the Lead Assessor responsible for the Pre-Assessment.
- The total number of Assessors will depend on the size of the facility.

The facility contact person assists with the External Assessment by completing the following:

- Informs the administrators and staff in advance of the visit that staff and mothers will be selected by Assessors for interviews.
- Secures one private, locked meeting room for the External Assessment Team's exclusive use during the assessment visit and secures additional private spaces for interviews as requested.
- Remains available throughout the assessment process.
- Arranges teleconference facilities so the BFI Assessment Team can

report to and confer with the BCC Board and BFI Assessment Committee on the final day of the BFI External Assessment.

### **BFI External Assessment Report**

- Upon completion of the External Assessment and the teleconference with the BCC, the External Assessment Team will meet with representatives of the facility to provide an overview of their findings. The final decision of designation is not disclosed during the External Assessment Site Visit.
- A written report with feedback for the facility is submitted by the Lead Assessor to the BCC BFI Assessment Committee within 6 weeks of the External Assessment. The facility and the relevant P/T BFI Committee will receive a copy of this report.

### **Outcome of the External Assessment**

- The BCC receives a comprehensive report of the External Assessment Team's findings and recommendations regarding the External Assessment from the Lead Assessor.
- When the Facility meets all the BFI criteria, Baby-Friendly Designation is awarded by the BCC. Designation is valid for 5 years from the time of the External Assessment.
  - Designation as a Baby-Friendly Hospital/Maternity Facility is a formal recognition by UNICEF and WHO, and is awarded by the BCC as the national BFI authority (in conjunction with the relevant P/T BFI Committee) recognizing that the BFHI Global Hospital Assessment Criteria for Baby-Friendly Hospitals and the *BCC BFI Ten Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicators* have been met.
  - Designation as a Baby-Friendly Community Health Service is a formal recognition by the BCC that the *BCC BFI Ten Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicators* have been met.
- When some criteria have not been fully met and require additional work, one of two possible outcomes will occur at the discretion of the Lead Assessor and the BCC BFI Assessment Committee.
  - The facility will receive a Conditional Designation and must create an action plan outlining how they will fulfill the conditions outlined in the External Assessment report. This action plan is submitted to the BCC and the P/T BFI Committee within 90 days of receipt of the External Assessment Report. The Lead Assessor can provide guidance as requested when the facility is creating the action plan. When the action



- plan is implemented and required changes are documented, designation is awarded.
- The facility will receive a BCC Baby-Friendly Initiative Certificate of Commitment when the External Assessment shows there is evidence to support some, but not all of the BFI criteria. The Baby-Friendly Certificate of Commitment is a formal recognition of progress made towards BFI designation and is awarded by the BCC, in conjunction with the relevant P/T BFI Committee. This certificate is valid for 1 year from the time of External Assessment and extensions may be granted by the BCC after discussion with the BCC BFI Assessment Committee. When a Certificate of Commitment is awarded the facility must:
    - Create an action plan with time lines addressing the criteria not met by the facility.
    - Submit the action plan to the BCC and the relevant P/T BFI Committee within 90 days of receipt of the External Assessment Report.
    - The P/T BFI Committee will provide information and assistance in formulating the action plan and making changes to meet the outstanding criteria whenever possible. In situations where the P/T BFI committee lacks capacity, the Lead Assessor will provide guidance to the facility.
    - If a return External Assessment is needed it is arranged when the necessary changes have been implemented. Additional fees may apply. The criteria that were not met during the External Assessment are Re-Assessed by a Lead Assessor and additional Assessors as required. This is determined by the BFI Assessment Committee.

### **Baby-Friendly Designation Celebration**

- The facility provides staff with feedback from the External Assessment Report.
- The facility liaises with the media to notify the public.
- The facility arranges a date for the presentation of the framed BFI Designation award.
- The BCC and P/T BFI Committee will not share information about the facility until the facility makes the information known to the public.

- The BCC posts on its website and updates the World Health Organization of BFI designated facilities in Canada after the information is made public.

## 6. Maintaining Baby-Friendly Status

- Following receipt of the Baby-Friendly designation, regular reports are completed by the facility to confirm that the BFI standards continue to be met.
- **Self-monitoring reports** are submitted annually to the P/ T Committee and include the following information:
  - Any change in the provision of service.
  - Breastfeeding statistics.
- A **BFI Interim Report** (BFI Status Report) is submitted every 2 years to the BCC and the P/T BFI Committee and includes the following information:
  - Any changes in the provision of service.
  - Updates regarding implementation of each of the *BCC BFI Ten Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicators for Hospitals and Community Health Services and Appendices*.
  - Breastfeeding surveillance including population data of priority populations.
  - Evidence of collaboration with key partners to identify and address issues revealed in breastfeeding surveillance information and any barriers as evidenced by breastfeeding surveillance information.
- Facilities must be reassessed every five years in order to maintain their status as a designated facility. Re Assessment involves a subsequent contract and additional costs to the facility. A Pre-Assessment document review is required for Re-Assessment. A Pre-Assessment Site visit is encouraged but optional.

## 7. Contract Details and Financial Guidelines

### 7.1 Pre-Assessment

- A BFI Pre-Assessment Contract is signed between the facility and the BCC.
- Pre-Assessment involves a document review and a site visit by a BCC Lead Assessor.

- A Hospital or Birthing Centre with over 200 births per year or a Community Health Service with over 200 infants at entry into service pays the following fees to the BCC prior to the pre-assessment:
  - Administration fee: \$525
  - Document Review fee: \$500
  - Site Visit fee: \$500 per day honorarium for the Lead Assessor
    - A per diem rate consistent with the current rate of the National Joint Council for meals and incidentals for the Lead Assessor
    - Travel and accommodation for the Lead Assessor are arranged and paid by the facility directly with travel companies and hotels prior to or at the time of the assessment or will be billed by the BCC.
- A Hospital or Birthing Centre with 200 or fewer births per year or a Community Health Service with 200 or fewer infants at entry into service pays the following fees to the BCC prior to the pre-assessment:
  - Administration fee: \$350
  - Document Review fee: \$500
  - Site Visit fee: \$500 per day honorarium for the Lead Assessor
    - A per diem rate consistent with the current rate of the National Joint Council for meals and incidentals for the Lead Assessor
    - Travel and accommodation for the Lead Assessor are arranged and paid by the facility directly with travel companies and hotels prior to or at the time of the assessment or will be billed by the BCC.

## 7.2 External Assessment

- A BFI External Assessment Contract is signed between the facility and the BCC.
- The External Assessment Team will consist of a Lead Assessor and usually 2 or more Assessors who will visit for 2 to 5 days, depending on the size of the facility.
- A Hospital or Birthing Centre with over 200 births per year or a Community Health Service with over 200 infants at entry into service pays the following fees to the BCC prior to the assessment:
  - Administration fee: \$ 1450
  - Assessor fees: \$500 per day honorarium for the Lead Assessor  
\$350 per day honorarium for each additional Assessor

A per diem rate consistent with the current rate of the National Joint Council for meals and incidentals for the Lead Assessor and each Assessor

- A Hospital or Birthing Centre with 200 or fewer births per year or a Community Health Service with 200 or fewer infants at entry into service pays the following fees to the BCC prior to the assessment:
  - Administration fee: \$975
  - Assessor fees: \$500 per day honorarium for the Lead Assessor  
\$350 per day honorarium for each additional Assessor  
A per diem rate consistent with the current rate of the National Joint Council for meals and incidentals for the Lead Assessor and each Assessor
- Travel and accommodation for the assessment team are arranged and paid by the facility directly with travel companies and hotels prior to or at the time of the assessment or will be billed by the BCC.
- The facility is responsible for the additional costs (honoraria, travel, and accommodation) for one Lead Assessor and any additional Assessors should a return External Assessment visit be required.

### **7.3 Designated Facilities**

- Annual fee: \$250
- If a facility has 200 or fewer births per year or 200 or fewer infants on entry into service the annual fee is \$125

### **7.4 Re-Assessment**

- A Re-Assessment Contract is signed between the facility and the BCC.
- Costs are to be determined and are consistent with the Pre-Assessment and an External Assessment outlined above.

**Please note:** The BCC reserves the right to revise the assessment costs as necessary to cover expenses. Revisions will be posted on the BCC website.