



The Breastfeeding Committee for Canada
The National Authority for the WHO/UNICEF
Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative in Canada

Annual Report 2006-2007

The last year has been a productive one for the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (BCC). Despite the lack of an ongoing source of funding for the organization, we have found ways of strengthening our network and continuing the very important work to support the Baby-Friendly Initiative. Thanks to the Public Health Agency of Canada and Rosemary Sloan in particular, we have received support for teleconference meetings and for a face-to-face meeting in Toronto March 25-27.

The following summarizes some key accomplishments during the year:

Baby-Friendly Initiative Designation and Monitoring

The BCC is proud to announce that in the year 2006-7 there were five community facilities designated as Baby-Friendly in Canada (bringing the total to seven):

- Thunder Bay, Ontario
- CLSC Vaudreuil-Soulanges, Quebec
- CLSC Samuel-de-Champlain, Quebec
- CLSC de la Haute-Yamaska, Quebec
- CLSC des Patriotes in Montérégie, Quebec

There are currently three Baby-Friendly Hospitals and one Birthing Centre, and while no new hospital designations were awarded in this past year, three hospitals have completed BFI Pre-Assessments and are eligible to receive *Certificates of Intent* while they continue to work towards External Assessment. One hospital will receive a *Certificate of Commitment* as they work on issues identified at their External Assessment. One previously designated hospital has completed their monitoring documents in preparation for reassessment in 2008.

During 2006-7 many other hospitals and community health services were actively involved in implementing the steps to successful breastfeeding which are improving the quality of care received by mothers and babies from coast to coast. We anticipate the number of assessments to continue to increase in 2007-8.

Sincere thanks to the members of the **BCC BFI Assessment Committee**, under the leadership of Marina Green, for the considerable time and energy they invest in working with a facility from first contact through document review, pre- and external assessments.

Implementation of the Baby-Friendly Initiative in Canada

Three new/revised documents were developed by the BFI Assessment Committee and added to the BCC website:

- BFI Assessment Process and Costs: a description of the Baby-Friendly Journey

- BFI Assessment Flowchart: an Overview of the BFI Process
- Calculation of Exclusive Breastfeeding Statistics: Hospitals & Birthing Centres

The **BCC Provincial and Territorial Baby Friendly Committee**, under the leadership of Kathy Inkpen and Claudette Landry, plays a vital role in supporting Provincial and Territorial Baby-Friendly Committees/ Networks/ Coalitions to, in turn, support hospitals and communities to prepare for Baby-Friendly designation. Networking and sharing at this level has been inspirational and capacity building. More information on activities at the P/T level can be found in the BCC Newsletter (March 2007) soon to be available on the website. Members of this committee are keenly anticipating an opportunity to meet face-to-face in Toronto March 25-27, thanks to funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada.

We view breastfeeding as an upstream health intervention that has many potential health benefits for the children who are breastfed, the women who breastfeed and therefore the population in general. The interest in and support of breastfeeding is increasing across the country as the immediate and long term benefits of breastfeeding are capturing the attention of health policy makers. Several Provincial and Territorial Governments are now funding Baby-Friendly implementation and education projects.

BCC Governance Transformation

At the 2006 Annual General Meeting, we agreed to strike a Transition Task Force under the leadership of Joanne Gilmore to develop the framework for a new governance model for the BCC which would shift the Board leadership to the representatives of the provinces and territories and ensure continued valuable guidance from the professional organization representatives in an expert advisory role. This group has begun consultations with the BCC P/T Committee and other key stakeholders and will meet in conjunction with the Provincial/ Territorial Committee meeting in Toronto March 25-27.

Support, Education, Information, and Research Activities & Other Accomplishments

The BCC newsletter has been resurrected. Thanks to the **Communications Committee** under the leadership of Kathy Venter, the first newsletter was released last fall and the spring 2007 issue is coming shortly. We have had translation support from the Public Health Agency of Canada.

The BCC received a contract from the Public Health Agency of Canada to revise the *10 Valuable Breastfeeding Tips* document. The Communications Committee, with input from other BCC Board members, initiated the revisions and will have a finalized draft by the end of March.

The **Infant Nutrition Committee**, under the leadership of Johanna Bergerman, has continued its work on developing a complementary feeding strategy and guidelines with a particular focus on the ongoing support of breastfeeding once complementary foods have been introduced. The BCC has made an application for a project under the Public Health Agency of Canada Physical Activity and Healthy Eating Contribution Program to extend the work on

complementary feeding. We expect to hear whether we were successful in this project later this spring.

The BCC made a submission to the Federal Labour Standards Review Commission recommending the inclusion of paid breastfeeding breaks in 2005-6. We have learned that these breastfeeding breaks have been sanctioned. Thanks to Johanna Bergerman for her leadership in writing this submission.

The **Education Committee**, under the leadership of Wendy Stefiuk, continues to work on building educational capacity across Canada through resources linked to the BCC web site. Funding and capacity are constraints to developing and maintaining current educational resources. Current goals of the committee are to develop priorities for committee work that mesh with the overall direction of the BCC and are feasible with current human and financial resources. One of the committee members, Perle Feldman, has made available to the BCC an updated annotated bibliography of breastfeeding resources.

There is still much to be done to protect, promote and support breastfeeding in Canada. Anyone reading this report who subscribes to the Vision, Mission and Objectives of the BCC is invited to become an Associate Member and join us as we move into a “Friendly” and progressive era for breastfeeding in Canada.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan James, Co-Chair
Marianne Brophy, Co-Chair

The Breastfeeding Committee for Canada was established in 1991 as a Health Canada initiative, following the World Summit for Children. BCC has a broad membership, involving some 20 professional and consumer organizations. BCC has been active in promoting breastfeeding since its inception, and specifically identified Baby-FriendlyTM Initiative as a priority in 1996.

WEBSITE www.breastfeedingcanada.ca