

Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program Proposals

The State of Alaska has been offered increased SFY 2011 funding for the Breastfeeding Peer Counseling (BFPC) program. This allows all WIC agencies the ability to have a BFPC program at their Local Agency if they desire. Alaska will be following the USDA Loving Support model for a BFPC program. To find out details about this model, go to:

http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Learning_Center/support_peer.html.

Alaska plans to expand our BFPC services by two methods:

1. Grant application process for Local WIC agencies interested in BFPC funding. The application process will be open to any WIC Local agency interested in providing BFPC services according to the Loving Support model. Funding will be based upon the number of breastfed infants in the Local Agency.
2. Explore interest by remote local agency WIC clinics to have a BFPC Bureau to provide services to clients. The "Bureau" is an attempt to centralize BFPC services and is recommended in the 2006 WIC Grantee Caseload & Funding Formula Analysis by CTG as a mechanism to share resources providing services to regions with smaller agencies or agencies that have difficulty accessing and supporting specialized staff.

The Bureau could be overseen by an IBCLC and provide BFPC services with off-site BFPC to rural agencies not interested in receiving BFPC funds directly. Rural agencies are designated as such by the funding formula and include: Maniilaq, Norton Sound Health Corporation, Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation, Kodiak Area Native Association, North Slope Borough and Native Village of Eyak. Any additional agency serving fewer than 500 participants is also eligible for BFPC services from the BFPC Bureau.

If you are interested in funding, contact Dana Kent at dana.kent@alaska.gov by May 7, 2010 with how the agency plans to provide BFPC services either through Local Agency funding or the BFPC Bureau.

BFPC teleconference for more detailed information to be arranged in May.

Proposals for Local Agencies to provide services will be due to Dana Kent. See details below for proposal guidelines.

Breastfeeding is recognized by medical experts and policy makers worldwide as a powerful, low-cost preventive health intervention as it has been proven to provide numerous health benefits to both the infant and mother. The State of Alaska does not currently meet all the Healthy People 2010 goals for breastfeeding practices. Breastfeeding duration at six months is lagging behind the 50% goal. Our WIC data shows statewide rates for February 2010:

- 84% breastfed at birth (Healthy People 2010 goal 75%)
- 44% breastfed at 6 months (Healthy People 2010 goal 50%)
- 36% breastfed at 12 months (Healthy People 2010 goal 25%)

Alaska's low-income women face barriers to breastfeeding that often seem insurmountable. According to comments from the Alaska PRAMS Mothers 2003 Birth data mother's concerns include:

- "I don't think people/nurses help enough w/breastfeeding. It gets frustrating & painful & no one ever teaches you how to do it & keep it up when you want to quit."
- "I think it would be really nice if immediately after delivery someone would come and discuss with mothers the different things to expect when breastfeeding."
- "So many moms turn to formula because they run into little (breastfeeding) problems that are actually quite normal."

Mothers who have overcome these challenges and breastfed their infants have been proven to be effective role models, empowering others to follow their example. The U.S. Preventive Services task force concludes that breastfeeding interventions that include peer counseling are effective in increasing breastfeeding rates. Growing evidence indicates that peer counseling programs are effective in reducing ethnic and cultural disparities in both duration and exclusivity of breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding Peer Counseling (BFPC) Program Goals

The BFPC program goal is to implement the BFPC services throughout the state of Alaska in an effort to offer breastfeeding support. According to evidence-based research, the BFPC support should increase breastfeeding duration and exclusivity and bring awareness to the significant health benefits for infants, mothers, families, and the environment.

- To increase breastfeeding rates with an emphasis on exclusive breastfeeding
- Reach Healthy People 2010 Goals
- Develop and implement partnerships for BFPC services
- Provide support to WIC eligible pregnant and breastfeeding women
- To have Alaska recognize WIC as the standard for a breastfeeding promotion and support program

BFPC Program Components

BFPC will have the following:

- Enthusiasm for breastfeeding
- Basic communication skills
- Previous breastfeeding experience (6 month minimum)
- Model good parenting skills
- Similarities with WIC participants served
- Current or previous WIC participant
- Similar ethnic background (if applicable)
- Similar age
- Same language spoke (if applicable)
- Cross-train so that BFPC are familiar with WIC services and WIC staff are trained and continue to provide breastfeeding support
- Available outside usual 8 to 5 working hours and can be reached on provided cell phone
- Attends an Alaska approved BFPC training or on-line module
- Positive representative of WIC

BFPC will provide:

- Education, support and encouragement to WIC eligible pregnant and breastfeeding mothers
 - Via phone, in-person contact, home visits, classes, support groups, texting, email or other
- Referrals to resources as outlined in the BFPC training
- Assistance with breast pumps
- Attendance to required staff meeting, BFPC meetings and teleconferences
- Documentation of contacts made with WIC participants
- Logs of breastfeeding contacts
- Reports as requested
- Confidentiality of all WIC information

Local Agency will provide:

- Breastfeeding-friendly WIC clinic
 - Present breastfeeding as the norm for all mothers and babies
 - Encourage mothers to breastfeed in any place in the clinic including the waiting room
 - Provide private breastfeeding area upon request of the mother
 - Provide breastfeeding classes and/or one-on-one education for all pregnant and breastfeeding women
- Breastfeeding equipment, as available
- Staff access to at least one IBCLC (on staff, MOA or contract) for referral and mentorship
- Education materials and other materials as needed for BFPC

- Training BFPC
- Pay BFPC
- Mentor and train **all** staff to be competent breastfeeding counselors and advocates
- Quarterly reports, other reports as needed
- Annual update on BFPC services
- Participate in World Breastfeeding Week
- BFPC program using the Loving Support Model
- Submit positive time keeping for individuals with dual roles for BFPC and WIC (other job duties)
- Ensure client BFPC contacts are not counted as a nutrition education contact
- BFPC program manager

Funding

Within the total amount of available funding, individual contracts will be awarded based on:

- The number of applications received
- The number of applicants who meet the minimum requirements as stated above
- The number of breastfed infants at the Local Agency

Estimated funding for each Local Agency is below:

Muni	\$57,433
RCPC	\$35,918
SEARHC	\$22,645
YKHC	\$31,478
NSHC	\$7,821
AFS -Palmer/Wasilla	\$28,105
AFS- Kenai/Homer	\$23,081
NSB	\$4,565
TCC	\$14,870
BBAHC	\$7,307
KANA	\$8,070
MIC	\$1,714
NVE	\$3,599
APIA	\$2,415
Maniilaq	\$4,370
ASYMCA	\$22,006
CITCI	\$10,602

Request for Funding

The BFPC proposal shall describe in detail the approach that will be taken to carry out the **BFPC Program Components** described in the above sections. Proposals should also include positions and responsibilities. Assurances made that proper staffing will occur. For BFPC programs already in existence an explanation of how additional funding will expand services and contribute to bringing current BFPC staffing structure into alignment with the above guidance.

Budget

Upon approval of Local Agency BFPC programs, funding will be determined and a budget will be required. See http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Learning_Center/support_faq.html for details on allowable budgetary costs.