



Implementation of BF Ordinance 2002 in public sector hospitals

The baseline study was conducted to assess the status of the implementation of the Protection of Breastfeeding and Child Nutrition Ordinance 2002 and the Rules 2009 within selected health facilities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Data was collected through a sample survey with healthcare providers and with a small number of mothers visiting the health facilities to crosscheck the information provided by doctors.

Survey findings reveal significant gaps in the implementation of the ordinance and relevant information among healthcare providers. Awareness of the National Infant Feeding Board (NIFB) is extremely low. Only around 13% healthcare providers were aware of it. The percentage was particularly low among nurses and relatively junior doctors. While Benazir Bhutto Hospital (BBH) has a comparatively higher percentage of healthcare providers saying they had heard of the Board and received information on the Breastfeeding Rules 2009, they were found wanting in terms of knowledge of exclusive breastfeeding, hazards of bottle feeding and the label required on the containers of infant formula milk and complimentary food.

Majority of doctors (68%) knew the child

should be exclusively breastfed up to 6 months. However, a noticeable 28% cited 3-5 months as the age for exclusive breastfeeding contradicting the internationally recommended age of 6 months. Doctors and mid-wives seemed more aware of the recommended age compared to nurses. Among doctors, those with longer experience in the medical profession seemed more aware of the recommended age for exclusive breastfeeding. Among mothers, those in the youngest age quintile (17-20) years had a higher percentage of those who did not know that the child should be exclusively breastfed for 6 months.

Vast majority of doctors knew that feeding with a cup and spoon was a safer option than bottle feeding. The percentage was highest in Poly Clinic and lowest in BBH with Holy Family falling in between. Healthcare providers with experience exceeding 15 years in the field had a higher percentage who knew about that. Among mothers, those in late 20s and 30s had relatively higher percentages who thought bottle feeding was safer than feeding with a cup and spoon, a preference that might be related to additional child-rearing and work responsibilities.

Close to 19% healthcare providers were of





the view that it was easy to return to breastfeeding once bottle feeding had been established, which is not true. There were relatively more respondents espousing this misguided notion in BBH compared to Holy Family and Poly Clinic. Yet again,

Breastfeeding Ordinance and Rules. BBH had the highest percentage followed by Holy Family and Poly Clinic. Greater percentages of junior doctors compared to senior ones and more male healthcare providers compared to females had reportedly received

and Cow and Gate's range of complimentary food, do not have the label on the containers in contravention of the Ordinance. Not a single chemist interviewed as part of the survey had heard of the Breastfeeding Ordinance.

In both the Healthcare Providers' Survey and the Mothers' Survey, BBH comes out as the facility with a relatively high incidence of sharing of information on breastfeeding with mothers. On probing, the researcher found out that the information in question was in the form of a note on the discharge slip given to mothers. Field visits in the three hospitals elicited no evidence of any leaflets or brochures available on the topic.

With regard to marketing of baby food, relatively low percentage of healthcare providers in Poly Clinic said it discouraged breastfeeding compared to the other two hospitals. There were more among junior and fresh healthcare providers who said such marketing discouraged breastfeeding compared to senior ones. Among nurses the percentage of those who were "not sure" about the link was the highest. In terms of mothers substantive knowledge of breastfeeding, 50% or so knew mother's milk helped prevent infections and diseases. The percentage of those who knew it prevented diarrheas was noticeably low.

In the light of the fact that some well-known brands of infant formula and complimentary food do not have the legally prescribed label on the containers there is a need for renewed engagement with the baby food industry. While the data collected from pharmacies cannot be generalized due to a small number of chemists interviewed, indications are they have not even heard of the Ordinance. – *TN Report*



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Over 81%
healthcare
providers did not
know of the label legally

doctors and mid-wives had greater numbers of respondents aware of the issue compared to nurses. Slightly over 11% healthcare providers reported to have received a sample for infant formula during the past one year in contravention of the

required on the containers of infant formula and supplementary food. Poly Clinic had the highest percentage of respondents who knew of the label and BBH the lowest. Visits to pharmacies showed that some brands, such as Abbot's Morinigia, Nestle's Lactogen

Breastfeeding 'protects mother'

Women who breastfeed their babies may be lowering their own risk of a heart attack, heart disease or stroke, research suggests.

A US study found women who breastfed for more than a year were 10% less likely to develop the conditions than those who



never breastfed. Even breastfeeding for at least a month may cut the risk of diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. The research features in the journal *Obstetrics and Gynaecology*. The study adds to a growing body of evidence suggesting breastfeeding has health benefits for both mother and baby. Research has found that breastfeeding reduces a woman's risk of ovarian and breast cancer and osteoporosis in later life. And the list of benefits for the

baby is long, with breast milk credited with protecting against obesity, diabetes, asthma and infections of the ear, stomach and chest. The latest US study, by the University of Pittsburgh, focused on nearly 140,000 post-menopausal women. On average, it had been 35 years since the women had last breastfed - suggesting the beneficial impact lasts for decades. As well as cutting the risk of heart problems, breastfeeding for more than a year cut the risk of high blood pressure by 12%, and diabetes and high cholesterol by around 20%.

Fat stores

It has been suggested that breastfeeding may reduce cardiovascular risk by reducing fat stores in the body.

However, the researchers believe the effect is more complex, with the release of hormones stimulated by breastfeeding also playing a role.

Researcher Dr Eleanor Bimla Schwarz said: "We have known for years that breastfeeding is important for babies' health; we

now know that it is important for mothers' health as well.

"Breastfeeding is an important part of the way women's bodies recover from pregnancy.

"When this process is interrupted women are more likely to have a number of health problems (including heart attacks and strokes). "The longer a mother nurses her baby, the better for both of them." In the UK, the Department of Health recommends exclusive breastfeeding for six months. June Davison, a cardiac nurse at the British Heart Foundation, said: "Breastfeeding has long been thought to be beneficial to baby and mother. "This research suggests that it might have also have heart health benefits for mum too. "However, it only

"The longer a mother nurses her baby, the better for both of them"

*Dr Eleanor Bimla Schwarz
University of Pittsburgh*

showed an association between breast feeding and these health benefits. We will need further research to understand why this is the case." (Courtesy: BBC News)

Editorial: Breastfeeding

Health professionals are the major stakeholders in the implementation of the Protection of Breastfeeding and Child Nutrition Ordinance 2002. Unfortunately the exclusive breastfeeding rate in Pakistan, according to Unicef report 'State of the World's Children 2009', is the lowest among South Asian countries, standing at 37.1 percent, and alarming only 13 percent health professionals are aware about the breastfeeding rules. In this scenario the awareness of health professionals about the ordinance is drastically needed. The Network for Consumer Protection, realizing this pathetic situation, launched a campaign to sensitize doctors, nurses and midwives to the importance of breastfeeding. As a part of this campaign a meeting at Islamabad Hotel and sensitization sessions at public hospitals were organized by The Network in which health professionals were exclusively invited. This initiative of The Network launched in collaboration with Unicef produced satisfactory results as health professionals in large numbers took part in all activities. This initiative needs to be continued keeping in view low breastfeeding rate and less awareness of health professionals about breastfeeding rules, and civil society organizations, UN bodies and government institutions should work in close collaboration for this cause.

Dr Arif Azad
Executive Coordinator



Activities

TN Staff Report

Follow-up meeting of health professionals

The Network for Consumer Protection organised the follow-up meeting with health professionals on the importance of breastfeeding and iodised salt at Islamabad Hotel on February 10, 2011. The meeting was a success as over 140 health professionals from Shifa International Hospital, Polyclinic, PIMS, CDA Hospital and Holy Family, and media persons attended the meeting, which got immense coverage in the media.

The meeting observed that this is alarming that only 13 percent health professionals are aware about the breastfeeding rules, and over 2.1 million babies are born every year with severe intellectual impairment caused by iodine deficiency during pregnancy. The government should pay due attention to these issues of utmost importance, and make legislation and ensure implementation of existing rules in this regard to secure the future of Pakistan. Dr Arif said more sensitizations sessions with health professional on Breastfeeding Ordinance were drastically needed because 100 percent exclusive breastfeeding till six months could only be ensured through awareness among health professionals and mothers.

NA Standing Committee on Health member Zile Huma said lawmakers were aware of the drastic need of ensuring implementation of breastfeeding rules, and of legislation on iodised salt. "I will make all-out effort to get passed the iodine deficiency disorders bill from the cabinet. There was some delay on part of the bureaucracy and efforts are being made to ensure smooth sailing of this bail from the cabinet," she added.



National Assembly Standing Committee on Health member Dr Zil-e-Huma addressing the meeting organised by The Network. Unicef official Dr Cisse Mohamed, Health Ministry DG Dr. Agha Mehboob and TN executive coordinator Dr Arif Azad are also seen in the picture. (Inset: Unicef chief commination officer Sheeba Afghani gives presentation on IDD's).



A large number of health professionals and media persons attended the seminar.



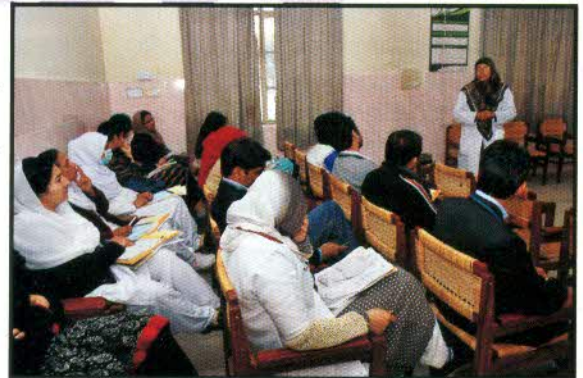
Shifa International Hospital peads consultant Dr Khwaja Ahmed Abbas gives presentation on the importance of breastfeeding and iodised salt.

Activities

Sensitization session at Benazir Bhutto Hospital, RWP

Based on Base line survey report by The Network, very less percentage of health professionals are aware about "Protection of Breastfeeding and Child Nutrition Ordinance 2002" The Network has arranged sensitization session for the health professionals of Benazir Bhutto Hospital on March 7th 2011.

The sensitization session was attended by more than 60 health professionals from pediatric and gynecology departments including doctors, nurses and midwives of both hospitals.



Participants of the sensitization session with health professionals.

Sensitization session at Holy Family Hospital, RWP



Participants of the sensitization session at Holy Family Hospital.

The Network for Consumer Protection held another sensitization session at the Holy Family Hospital in Rawalpindi on March 14, 2011. About fifty health professional participated in the session. Dr Rubina and Dr Khwaja Ahmed Abbas gave presentations on breastfeeding. Later certificates were given to the participants. Addressing the session, TN executive coordinator Dr Arif Azad said according to a study of Unicef report 'State of the World's Children 2009', the exclusive breastfeeding rate in Pakistan was the lowest among South Asian countries, standing at 37.1 percent.

MEDIA COVERAGE





Decline in Breastfeeding after BF Ordinance 2002, Who is to be blamed?!!

Breastfeeding is one of the most important things you can do to give your child the very best start in life. Breast milk provides the optimum nutrition for your baby. Despite their efforts, formula companies simply cannot duplicate the amazing benefits of breast milk. The World Health Organization recommends breastfeeding for at least two years. Medically, it's by far the most

faltering or uneven growth and a variety of afflictions like diarrhea, chest infection and sore throat

In Pakistan, women know breastfeeding is best, but with a literacy rate of less than 30 percent, they are extremely vulnerable to promotional influence. Pakistan's breastfeeding culture is under threat. While 95 percent of mothers initiate breastfeeding, only 16 percent exclusively

Bottle-feeding contributes significantly to diarrhea and respiratory infections, two leading causes of infant death in Pakistan. We also have a lot of mothers who must work outside the home to keep their kith and kin together, making it impractical and often almost impossible to continue breastfeeding for the WHO recommended six months

The use of infant formula over breastfeeding can pose problems

in developing nations where safe water is hard to come by, and where an available supply of formula isn't always guaranteed. In Armenia, in 1988, after a devastating earthquake, infant formula was shipped to the country for relief purposes, and its use heavily promoted, but contaminated water and an inadequate



nutritionally sound choice for a baby. Breast milk, after all, is designed for human infants, and formula companies are continually striving to improve their products by making them closer to breast milk. Studies suggest that breastfed babies have fewer ear infections, bond more closely with their mothers, have fewer allergies, and have less colic. Breastfed infants grow up to be smarter than their formula fed peers, albeit by only a few points on the IQ scale. Doctors say intake of anything other than mother's milk in the first six months leads to pseudo-

breastfeed between 0-3 months. Only 56 percent of mothers are still breastfeeding their babies for 20-23 months. But this is nothing new. Heavy marketing by the baby food industry, among other factors, has contributed to falling breastfeeding rates. Formulas and other infant food products are encouraged and are easily available at all the general stores, grocery shops and even in bakeries.

The World's Children Report 2000' released by the UN children's agency, Unicef, nearly 10 percent of babies born in this country die in the first year.

supply of formula led to an increase in infant mortality. Of course, these conditions aren't seen in most Western countries.

Aggressive and often inappropriate marketing of Breastmilk substitute was identified by WHO as a significant factor contributing to the alarming decline in breastfeeding and the associated increase malnutrition, morbidity and mortality among young infant world wide

In 1981 WHO and Unicef developed international code of marketing of Breast milk substitute. – *TN Report*

WHO 1981 marketing code of Breast milk-substitute

Formula companies may not promote their products in hospitals, shops or to the general public. They cannot give free samples to mothers or free or subsidized supplies to hospitals or maternity wards. They cannot give gifts to health workers or mothers (those handy little diaper bags and cute little teddy bears are forbidden). They cannot promote their products to health workers: any information provided by companies must contain only scientific and factual matters (no detailing doctors, no free samples for the poor). Baby pictures may not be shown on baby milk labels. Breastfeeding advocates have an agenda. They believe with all their hearts that breastfeeding is not only the best choice, it's the only choice. If given the chance, they would impose their views of parenting and motherhood on every woman. We would all be forced to nurse our babies for the requisite six months. Pakistan was one of the 118 countries, which, in May 1981, adopted the International Code of Marketing of Breast milk Substitutes. Pakistan has passed breast feeding law in Oct 2002 which has included the main clause of international code of marketing of breast milk substitute. The ordinance has various features, including: "the definition of designated products",

complementary food, infant formula, Follow-up formula.

- 1) No advertisement of any designated product; labels must not contain, anything that may discourage breastfeeding and must be approved before marketing or sale in Pakistan;
- 2) All labels must be written in Urdu and contain stipulated notices and information; free or low cost supplies,
- 3) Gifts, services or other benefits should not be given to health workers or health-care facilities;
- 4) Condensed milk, evaporated milk and skimmed milk must contain a notice stating that it should not be fed to babies below 6 month of age; and,
- 5) It shall not be stated or implied that designated products are a substitute for mother's milk nor that they are equivalent to, comparable with or superior to mother's milk.
- 6) Legislation banning the sale, promotion or advertisement of any substitute for breast milk in health care facilities throughout the country.
- 7) Prohibits the distribution of samples of substitute products on health care premises or to health care personnel and expiration dates must be clearly exhibited on the labels of the products
- 8) Another feature of this law is the establishment of National Infant Feeding Board and

provincial infant feeding committees. The board shall be consist of a chairman and not more than such number of members as the federal government has prescribed ,provided that not less than half of the total number of the members of the board shall comprise of such person who are professional qualified with respect to infant and young child nutrition and at least one member of the board shall be selected from the industry involved in the manufacturing and marketing of designated products. sectary of the health department or his nominee shall be ex-officio member of the board.

9) No manufacturer, distributor or any person engage by them shall produce or distribute any educational or informational material relating to infant and young child feeding.

10) Any person who produce and distribute educational material shall submit copies thereof to the board for approval without which the material may not be disseminated.

Breastfeeding has health benefits for mothers and help in creating healthy society. but this culture of breastfeeding is vanishing and bottle feeding culture is prevailing in Pakistan day by day and it is the demand of time to stand against it. This culture is flourishing not only urban areas but also moving towards rural areas of Pakistan. In Pakistan 80% people are living in rural areas. If people from rural areas follow the route which manufacturers and distributors are showing them then it will become difficult for the government and even for NGOs to stop this evil. It is the time when government and NGOs can work together and nip this evil in the bud and show real picture to the people of Pakistan about the hazards of formula milk.

— TN Report





Changing meaning of Breastfeeding in the wake of HIV epidemics in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Breastfeeding remains normative and vital for child survival in the developing world. However, knowledge of the risk of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) transmission through breastfeeding has brought to attention the controversy of whether breastfeeding can be safely practiced by HIV positive mothers. Prevention of mother to child.

Transmission (PMTCT) programs provide prevention services to HIV positive mothers including infant feeding counseling based on international guidelines. This study aimed at exploring infant feeding choices and how breastfeeding and the risk of HIV transmission



through breastfeeding was interpreted among HIV positive mothers and their counselors in PMTCT programs in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The study was conducted in the PMTCT clinics in two governmental hospitals in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, using qualitative interviews and participant observation. Twenty two HIV positive mothers and ten health professionals working in PMTCT clinics were interviewed. The study revealed that HIV positive mothers have developed an immense fear of breast milk which is out of proportion compared to the evidence of risk of transmission documented. The fear is expressed through avoidance of breastfeeding or, if no other choice is available, through an intense unease with the breastfeeding situation, and through expressions of sin, guilt, blame and regret. Health professionals working in the PMTCT programs seemed to largely share the fear of HIV positive mother's breast milk, and their anxiety was reflected in the counseling services they provided. Formula feeding was the preferred infant feeding method, and was chosen also by HIV positive women who had to beg in the streets for survival.

<http://www.internationalbreastfeedingjournal.com>

Breastfeeding prevents seizures, study finds

The longer a mother breastfeeds her baby, the less likely the child is to have seizures later in life, according to a recent study published in the Journal of Pediatrics. Danish researchers observed that babies who are breastfed for at least the first nine months are nearly half as likely to experience seizures than babies breastfed for only the first three months. The team from the University of Aarhus School of Public Health looked at the early feeding habits of nearly 70,000 Danish children born between 1996 and 2000, whom they tracked until 2008.

They asked mothers how long they breastfed their children, and whether or not those children experienced seizures after they were a year old. Data indicated that the longer babies are breastfed, the less likely they are to experience seizures or develop epilepsy, the neurological condition marked by chronic seizures. According to statistics, about one in 100 U.S. children have two or more seizures during their childhood. Those breastfed at least three months have a one in 135 chance of having seizures, while those breastfed over six months have a one in 150 chance. Those breastfed nine months or longer have a one in 200 chance, and the rate continues to drop the longer the duration of breastfeeding.

<http://www.reuters.com>

