



Promote Breastfeeding by the Certification Program on Baby-Friendly Hospitals and Clinics

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Objectives:

By external audit and peer competition to encourage hospitals and clinics to provide a better breastfeeding environment and hence to increase the breastfeeding rate.

Methods:

In view of the breastfeeding rate in Taiwan was only 5.8% in 1996, which is lower than that of 66% in Denmark, 41% in Japan, and 23 ~ 44% in United Kingdom and United States; therefore, enhancing the breastfeeding rate in Taiwan has become an important task in public health.

We took the experience of Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) that WHO and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) jointly proposed as the reference and invited experts, scholars, health authorities and peer to compose a project team to develop a certification program in Taiwan; hospitals and clinics that provide obstetric service could apply on a "voluntary basis" and adopted "On-site inspection" as the core of the system, the process was carried out in the following manner:

1. The certification is proceeded through interviews, medical record review, annual statistical analysis and medical related work.
2. The surveyors interviewed the obstetricians, pediatricians, nurses and mothers, and the interviewing covers the maternity ward, nursery and out-patient units.
3. We also performed a questionnaire to the hospitals/clinics and surveyors in order to evaluate the effectiveness.

Results:

1. The coverage of hospitals and clinics participated in "Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative Certification" was based on the number of childbirth reported from Bureau of National Health in 2010, and the total number of certified hospitals and clinics was 144. From the 407 hospitals that had birth registered in the record of notification, a total of 122,472 cases of live births in 2010. In terms of the coverage of certified hospitals, the 144 hospitals and clinics accounted for 35.4% out of the total number of hospitals and clinics nationwide; as to calculate the percentage of total number of births, the result was 67.2%, which was higher than the 53.9% in 2009, increased by 13.3%, the certification pass rate has been increasing according to results, number from 94 (88 hospitals, 6 clinics) in 2007 increased to 144 (121 hospitals, 23clinics) in 2010, substantially increased by 56.95%, as shown in Table 1.

Year	National Total		Number of certified hospital/ clinic		Birth in the certified hospital/clinic	
	No. of hospital	No. of birth	No. of hospital	%	No. of birth	%
2007	461	95400	94	20.4	45228	47.4
2008	447	78251	94	21.0	36202	46.3
2009	433	140650	113	26.1	75852	53.9
2010	407	122472	144	35.4	82277	67.2

Table 1. The coverage of the applying Baby-friendly hospitals and clinics certification

2. In 2010, the average "breastfeeding only" rate was 41.86% during hospital stay, apparently increased over previous years. Bureau of Health Promotion study showed that in 2010 the average breastfeeding duration of a baby in a baby-friendly hospital/clinic was 3.3 months, which was higher than the 2.4 months for the one in a non-baby-friendly hospital/clinic, the statistic confirmed that the breastfeeding rate of a baby given birth in a baby-friendly hospital/clinic was significantly higher than that in a non-baby-friendly hospital/clinic.
3. In terms of the implementation effectiveness in the certification process, a survey was carried out by giving questionnaire to the hospitals and clinics and surveyors to analyze the administrative operations, the process of the work, satisfaction for the overall process and so on; 97.3% of the hospitals and clinics and surveyors showed a positive identification that the certification system provided real benefits to improve the breastfeeding rate.
4. Established follow-up visits from time to time to maintain the baby-friendly hospitals and clinics for the quality in obstetric services and assist those hospitals and clinics that willing to apply for baby-friendly certification to pass the certification, in order to achieve the result in increasing the breastfeeding rate.

Conclusions:

1. The resulting certification pass rate has been increasing year by year, as well as the breastfeeding rate, showing that the policy supporting in breastfeeding, through a certification system, played an important role in successful promotion for mothers to breastfeed.
2. The breastfeeding rate of a certified hospitals and clinics was higher than non-certificated hospitals and clinics, showing the important influence of the certification system in initiative for hospitals and clinics to create a breastfeeding environment.

