

P 21. ACADEMIC DETAILING TO ENHANCE BREASTFEEDING COUNSELLING AND BABYFRIENDLY COMPLIANCE IN A LOCAL SERVICES NETWORK IN QUEBEC

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Issues: Although Quebec's National Public Health Program 2003-2012 advocates breastfeeding counseling as an effective preventive clinical practice, current US and Canadian recommendations indicate there is yet insufficient evidence to make a recommendation regarding advice given by primary caregivers to promote breastfeeding. Description: A pilot intervention including outreach visits by an expert physician (academic detailer), training, tools and resources was conducted between 2004 and 2007 in a local services network located in southwestern Quebec. The network includes two community health centers (serving 1 900 mothers and babies annually), one hospital (delivering 1 300 babies annually) and 3 breastfeeding support groups. Hospital- and community-based physicians (general practitioners, obstetricians-gynecologists and pediatricians) and nurses as well as perinatal health program managers and peer counselors were targeted to participate. A process and outcome evaluation is ongoing, including a pre- and post-intervention telephone questionnaire to experimental and control patients, a post-intervention self-administered questionnaire to experimental and control physicians and a focus group with clinical coordinators and program managers.

Lessons learned: Academic detailing proved effective to reach all targeted groups, to disseminate uniform practice guidelines and tools, to enhance counseling skills through training and to foster networking. Many steps toward Baby-Friendly certification were undertaken during the intervention period.

Next steps: Preliminary results will be presented including those addressing the quality and quantity of breastfeeding advice received by experimental and control women from their doctor. Aids and barriers to intervention implementation will be discussed. Successful outcomes could result in generalization of this approach to other local services network in Quebec.