



Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine Newsletter

August 2024

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A newsletter offering for Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine members and colleagues from across the world.

Welcome to Inside ABM! Come on in!

Welcome to the **16th issue** of *Inside ABM*!

We had an amazing World Breastfeeding Week at ABM! What about you? As this special month comes to a close, we honor breastfeeding medicine practitioners everywhere for their dedication and hard work. So much has been done, but yet, so much work is left to do!

In our 16th issue, we will travel to Ghana with one of our members to explore the state of breastfeeding and then drop back into our home communities to find doulas to partner with. We also have so many ABM offerings to tell you about as we leave summer and start our conference season, starting with the newly revised Clinical Protocol #19, *“Breastfeeding Promotion in the Prenatal Period.”*

If you have ideas for items to include in future issues and/or are interested in being a part of the newsletter team, please contact abm@bfmed.org. We would love to get your ideas out into the ABM Universe!



WABA | WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK 2024

How ABM Spent World Breastfeeding Week

Today, we are highlighting the ABM Coffee & Tea Chats that took place this month as part of World Breastfeeding Week and the many other national, regional, and local celebrations across the globe. As an international organization, ABM supports providers on every continent. Our Coffee & Tea Chats covered the following breastfeeding medicine hotspots: Ghana, Israel, Mexico, Europe, and Asia. Access the recordings [here](#).

We reached out to Evelyn Aboagye, MD MPH CBS FAAP, to expand on her detailed and provocative Coffee & Tea Chat discussion on the state of breastfeeding in Ghana. Dr. Aboagye discussed the positive experiences with healthcare workers' engagement and shared their top breastfeeding challenges, which sound strikingly similar to those in the U.S.: low milk supply, delayed stage II lactogenesis, latch challenges, sociocultural factors, and inconsistent implementation of supportive policies impacting breastfeeding. We learned that Ghanaian families must also navigate the challenges of a tiered public/private health care system, regional inconsistencies in power supply, disparities in potable water access, and growing economic pressures to return to work. There is some movement to extend maternity and paternity leave, which is a step in the right direction. Dr. Aboagye also noted that public health facilities are tasked to implement the WHO's ["10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding,"](#) with some institutions designated as Baby Friendly but inadequate processes and monitoring to maintain BFHI accreditation. Indeed, exclusive breastfeeding rates outcomes are declining, with only 53% of Ghanaians breastfeeding exclusively at age 6 months. Much more mixed feeding is observed, and the formula companies are gaining ground through marketing and aggressive promotion.

We asked Dr. Aboagye some additional questions to better understand what is needed in Ghana to reverse the downward breastfeeding trends.

Dr. Aboagye, you told us about how you now live in the U.S., but you have returned to Ghana several times to educate providers and breastfeeding workers, which is amazing. If you got a million-dollar grant tomorrow to support breastfeeding in Ghana, how would you spend it?

I would enhance breastfeeding education by integrating it into medical and specialty nursing curricula while training current healthcare workers. I would collaborate with the Ministry of Health and Ghana Health Service to strengthen national policies, advocate for extended maternity leave to 6 months, workplace accommodations, and enforcement of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes. Additionally, I would establish lactation support centers and launch community initiatives, including peer support programs to address sociocultural barriers and promote breastfeeding.

You talked about the family leave policies that are in process. What is another policy that you would like to see introduced nationally in Ghana?

With 84% of deliveries occurring in health facilities, providing lactation spaces and lactation specialist services could be a game changer for both mothers and healthcare workers returning to work.

Do you plan to take another working trip to Ghana in the future? If so, what are your plans?

Yes, I am providing a newborn jaundice education workshop with rural healthcare workers and an opportunity to discuss culturally relevant approaches to common breastfeeding challenges.

Getting to know the author:

What is your most used emoji?



If the day was 25 hours long, what would you do with that extra hour?

Spend time with my family.



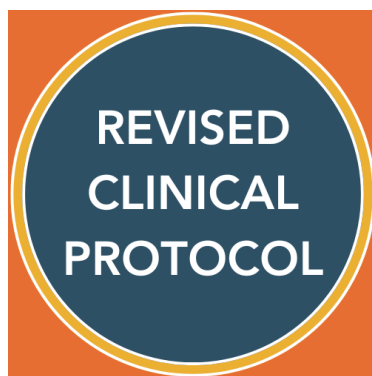
Question of the Month

Watch the [video](#) from the August 7 ABM Coffee Chat to answer this question: **Ghana has both public and private health care entities, such as hospitals and clinics, at play. In which type of institution is there more consistent breastfeeding support?**

- a. Breastfeeding support is more consistent in privately-operated health care institutions
- b. Breastfeeding support is more consistent in public government institutions
- c. Breastfeeding is consistent across all health care institutions in Ghana
- d. There really are no meaningful breastfeeding policies found in either type of institution

Answer at the bottom of the newsletter

ABM Updates & Membership News



[Read the Protocol!](#)

Revised Clinical Protocol #19: Breastfeeding Promotion in the Prenatal Period

ABM has released a revision of its 19th Clinical Protocol, "[Breastfeeding Promotion in the Prenatal Period](#)," originally published in 2015. In this updated version, prenatal and breastfeeding medicine practitioners are supplied with even more evidence-based recommendations, helping individuals and organizations to advocate for integrating prenatal breastfeeding promotion into their existing systems. [Read the protocol](#) and [share our press release](#) with your network.



Leadership Academy Applications Open

Grow your leadership skills by participating in the next cohort of the [Leadership Academy](#)! The program is designed to provide participants with transferable leadership skills, mentoring from breastfeeding experts, and experience leading a project that advances breastfeeding medicine. The deadline to apply is September 27, 2024.

[Learn More!](#)

ABM Statement on the Importance of Human Milk to Reduce the Risk of NEC in Premature Infants

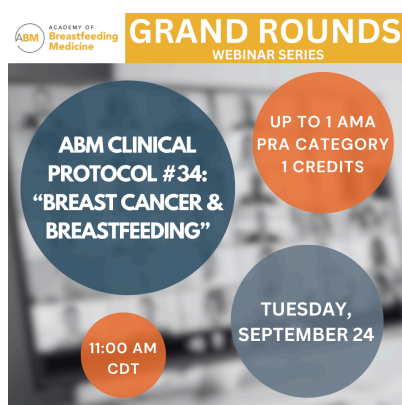
ABM has issued a statement on the best ways to decrease NEC in infants:

- Promote early and frequent milk expression, skin-to-skin contact, and direct breastfeeding when appropriate by the healthcare team
- Adopting public policies that increase mothers' milk supply
- Adopting public policies to financially support mothers

Read the full statement [here](#).



[Read the Statement!](#)



[Learn More!](#)

ABM Grand Rounds: ABM Clinical Protocol #34, "Breast Cancer and Breastfeeding"

Save the Date: Tuesday, September 24, 2024 | 3:00 PM CDT (UTC-5)

Plan to join us for our next Grand Round, where we will discuss our [Clinical Protocol #34](#) on breast cancer and breastfeeding on Tuesday, September 24, 2024, at 3:00pm CDT (UTC -5). Stay tuned for registration information and save the date for the session!

The University of Virginia School of Medicine and School of Nursing designates these live activities for a maximum of **1 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits** per webinar to a participant who successfully completes this educational activity.

ABM Grand Rounds is a live webinar program offered each month, addressing current clinical practice guidelines in the care of breastfeeding parents and infants. Each Grand Round is recorded and offered as on-demand education in the ABM Education Center.

Missed other Grand Rounds? Access the on-demand recordings [here!](#) (And don't forget to fill out your evaluations to get credit!)

REGISTER for ABM's 29th Annual International Meeting This November!

There are exactly 30 days left to take advantage of our early bird registration pricing for the ABM 29th Annual International Meeting to be held November 14-17, 2024, in Schaumburg, IL, USA. Register before September 30th to save up to \$100! Registration includes access to



Centennial Celebration & Silent Auction Fundraiser **Saturday, November 16, 6:00-9:30 PM CDT (UTC -5)**

Join us for a memorable evening of community and generosity as we celebrate the centennial birthday of one of our esteemed founding members, Ruth A. Lawrence, at our Centennial Celebration & Silent Auction Fundraiser. Dr. Lawrence celebrated her 100th birthday in August. **This special event will not only honor Ruth's incredible legacy but also raise essential funds to support our organization's mission and vision. Your contributions will help us continue our vital work in developing clinically-based protocols, position statements, patient handouts, and other educational resources that empower breastfeeding professionals to support the patients and families they serve.** Enjoy dinner, live music, exclusive auction items, and the chance to connect with fellow breastfeeding medicine professionals who share your passion for making a difference.

By attending, you'll be part of a night celebrating our past and future as we work together to advance knowledge, improve patient outcomes, and foster a healthier community. We look forward to celebrating with you and making a meaningful impact together!

Make sure to add the celebration to your cart when you [register!](#) Already registered for the meeting and want to add this event? Call or email Member Services at 847.375.4726 or abm@bfmed.org and our team will be happy to assist you!



Have You Seen This?

How to Support Doulas in Your Community

This month's featured article is all about doulas, inspired by the U.S. Breastfeeding Committee's theme of [Nourish, Sustain, Thrive](#) for National Breastfeeding Month.

*Review written by **Paula K. Schreck, MD NABBLM-C IBCLC FABM***

The doula workforce is expanding rapidly in the United States, in response to the rising infant and maternal mortality rates and fueled by Medicaid reimbursement trends. Doulas are trained non-clinical professionals, often from marginalized communities, who come to the team as experts in the families they serve. Our featured article this month is a scoping review that lays out the evidence for the doula workforce as a driver of not only optimal support but also improved outcomes. The U.S. authors scoured the literature to include the best 25 articles on the integration of doula care in their review, focusing on doula utilization among birthing people of color. The review included quantitative and qualitative studies. Indeed, families reported doulas played a pivotal role in empowerment, advocacy, improved relationships, and education. The reviewers also included quantitative studies that examined the doula effect on birth outcomes. They found studies that reported a significant improvement in preterm birth, C-section rate, and epidural use. Further, six of nine studies showed significant improvement in breastfeeding outcomes with the integration of doula care

But despite the impact doulas can have from room to room, they are still underutilized. Families and healthcare providers lack awareness of their value. The authors suggest that strategic partnerships between community-based doulas and clinical entities such as hospitals, providers, and clinical lactation professionals may improve the uptake of doula services, particularly within communities of color.

Let's start with you, reader. Here are some suggestions on how to support doulas in your community:

1. Be able to answer the question, “What does a doula do?” Follow [this link](#) to a brief article that explains. Educate yourself.
2. Find the doulas within your community. Most doulas are NOT part of agencies. Start with a Google search. You will be surprised to find that doulas are already there, many as single proprietor entities. Acknowledge, welcome, and listen to the doulas as they become more and more present at your birthing center as valued members of the healthcare team.
3. Contribute to development within the doula workforce. Doula training can include education on lactation management, but it is often limited. Doulas can help families navigate breastfeeding challenges better when equipped with more evidence-based knowledge and education. If you are reading this newsletter, you are likely a breastfeeding expert in your community. Consider contributing your expertise to doula events and trainings. See the example of a “Save the Date” for an event in Detroit where two ABM members will be offering education for doulas on peripartum breastfeeding management, including information on the management of jaundice, hypoglycemia, and more.

Keep the celebration of breastfeeding alive by locating and working more closely with doulas in your community!

Citation: Kang E, Stowe N, Burton K, Ritchwood, T.D. Characterizing the utilization of doula support services among birthing people of color in the United States: a scoping review. BMC Public Health. 2024 Jun 13;24(1):1588. doi: 10.1186/s12889-024-19093-6. PMID: 38872108; PMCID: PMC11177381.



Question of the Month Answer:

ANSWER: B

The answer is B. As is typical for many developing countries, it is the government-sponsored public entities that have the most consistent policies in place due to increased oversight by governmental agencies.



Inside ABM

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