



Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine Newsletter

September 2024

You are receiving this message as a non-member. Interested in joining?
Head to [our website](#) to learn more about the benefits of an ABM membership!

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 **17th issue** of Inside ABM! Come on in!

In this issue, we build on the theme of community continuity for breastfeeding support with a spotlight review of a study that was a collaborative effort between ABM and Reaching Our Sisters Everywhere (ROSE). This study shines a spotlight on breastfeeding priorities in the Black community. We will end with an examination of a potential “village of support” that can be found in almost every city in the world. You will also be updated on ABM’s activities and opportunities as we ramp up for our Annual International Meeting this November in Schaumburg, IL, USA. **Registered yet?**

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!



September Spotlight

This month we are shining a BIG spotlight on this study published recently in the *Breastfeeding Medicine* journal that represents a collaboration between ABM and [ROSE](#). ABM and ROSE collaborated in a multi-methods approach to identify breastfeeding priorities most important to parents, funded by the [Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute \(PCORI\)](#).

The purpose of the study was to elicit research questions that might make breastfeeding easier, with the focus on Black families in the United States. The research approach started with virtual and in-person focus groups, one large convening, and an online survey disseminated through ABM and ROSE social media channels. All of these initial outreach modalities used inclusive strategies and open-ended questions to create a list of priorities and future research topics most relevant to Black families in the U.S., with key stakeholders being families and lactation support providers from the greater Washington, D.C. area. The results of this first phase included 26 patient-centered outcome measures and 40 research topics, synthesized by the researchers from the collected data.

In phase 2, these measures and topics were sent out via survey to a wider range of families and lactation providers. It was open for participation from December 20, 2022, through January 23, 2023. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of the measures and topics on a scale of 0–10, with 0 being not at all important and 10 being extremely important.

A total of 679 survey participants contributed to this second survey phase. The result was a rich and varied list of priorities and potential research topics stratified by interest and perceived value to those closest to the lived experience and the work. (Wow! This reviewer is impressed by the complexity and thoughtfulness of the approach).

We reached out to one of the study's cocreators, Ann Kellams, MD IBCLC NABBLM-C FABM, to discuss its findings and the PCORI experience in general.

Dr. Kellams, this study design has many layers. In your opinion, what was the most unique or notable aspect of this study's design?

The most notable thing about this study is that it moves beyond measuring breastfeeding “success” by whether or not someone initiated breastfeeding or for how long they breastfed. Rather, it starts asking about what breastfeeding outcomes are important to the individuals who are breastfeeding. It's a novel idea that perhaps should not be so novel!

Authors used the word “transformative” to describe the in-person convening of parents, community breastfeeding experts, and ABM members. What was your experience?

Despite being jet-lagged having just returned from overseas, I was energized by participating in the convening led by Dr. Alison Stuebe. The room was filled with a mix of breastfeeding individuals, new parents, and a multidisciplinary group of experts from the U.S. and beyond. Notes were taken by a graphic recorder, and pictures of her work are featured in the article—it is true that a picture is worth a thousand words. Hearing from this diverse group of individuals and shining a light on the lived experience of families with new babies in today's society was not only important, but also inspired us all to hone in on what we can do as researchers, health care workers, communities, and individuals to better support those who are breastfeeding. How can we make breastfeeding easier for them?

What was your biggest takeaway from this research experience regarding how families may define breastfeeding success?

There were so many, but the ones that stick with me the most are the questions that get at what really is important to families with new babies about breastfeeding:

- Did you know what to expect before the baby came?
- Did you get the education or help that you needed?
- Did anyone recommend breastfeeding to you?
- If you encountered any problems while breastfeeding, did you get the help you needed?

What are the next steps for ABM and ROSE now that these priorities have been identified?

As a community of breastfeeding and lactation experts, we have to think about how we can use this information to transform clinical practice and biomedical research to take our efforts to care for and support these families in a way that truly meets their needs and helps them achieve their personal breastfeeding goals.

We encourage you to [read the full article](#) to learn more about the novel collaborative research between ABM and ROSE. The top 4 findings include:

Top 4 Patient Centered Breastfeeding Outcomes (identified by parents and lactation workers)

- There was someone who could listen and help me with breastfeeding.
- I had the resources I needed to keep going.
- I had the support that I needed to keep going (e.g., help from other people).
- I felt successful in my breastfeeding journey.

Top 4 Infant Feeding Research Questions (ranked by parents and lactation workers)

- How can we make sure health care providers give the right advice and involve the mothers in the care plan?
- How can we make sure that all mothers have access to affordable and equitable breastfeeding support?
- What types of education do health care professionals need? And what stands in the way of them being educated?
- How should we prepare families for breastfeeding before the baby is born?

Getting to know the author:

Which autumn activity would you choose—apple picking or football?

Oh gosh, can I say both? A really great day would be one in which I go apple picking in the morning on beautiful Carter Mountain with gorgeous views, make my grandmother's famous apple crisp at home, bring it to the tailgate outside the stadium with all of our friends under the fall leaves, and then have a blast cheering on the University of Virginia Cavaliers (who need all the help they can get!)

What is your go-to karaoke song?

While it is *waaay* out of my range, my favorite is to sing *Endless Love* with my husband—you cannot get any cheesier or more romantic (and humorous) than that!

Citation: Kellams, A., Kair, L., Broomfield-Massey, K., Harper, K. D., Bugg, K., & Stuebe, A. (2024). Setting the Agenda for Patient-Centered Research in Infant and Young-Child Feeding: Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine and Reaching Our Sisters Everywhere. <https://doi.org/10.1089/bfm.2023.0297>



Read the [study](#) to answer this question: Considering the major takeaways of the study, what do Black families feel is the most important feeding outcome to track to measure success?

- a. Breastfeeding exclusivity at 6 months
- b. Breastfeeding continuation at 1 year
- c. Breastfeeding exclusivity in the hospital
- d. The creation of "villages of support" for breastfeeding families with the integration of community-based organizations

Answer at the bottom of the newsletter

ABM Updates & Membership News



President's Column: Elien Rouw, MD FABM

"It is July 2024, and I am writing this column about World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) 2024. This week will start on August 1st, but the column will be published in the September Issue. Many of you will think "mustard after the meal." However, in parts of Europe, WBW is still celebrated in Autumn (this year September 30th–October 6th), as not to interfere with the holiday season when many parents and health care workers are on vacation. So in between these dates (August and October), it is the perfect time to reflect about the importance of this week.

But there is another reason I want to address WBW once again. We now have the habit of dedicating a day or a week or a month to special topics or target groups. Webinars are given, attention is given in the printed press and in the social media, and perhaps some actions are organized. And afterward? The theme is closed until next year. It is beautiful that a theme or a group is in the picture for one day or one week or one month. And it is not enough. Breastfeeding is here the case in point." [Read more.](#)



ABM Grand Rounds: "Breast Cancer and Breastfeeding Case Study"

Register Now: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 | 9:00 AM CDT (UTC-5)

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month! Catch up on ABM's educational resources regarding breast cancer and breastfeeding by [registering](#) for this month's Grand Rounds, "**Breast Cancer and Breastfeeding Case Study**," on **Wednesday, October 23, at 9:00am CDT (UTC -5)**. Share [this flyer](#) with your network!

In this **Grand Rounds** webinar, Dr. Lauren Macaluso will present a case study discussion about breast cancer and breastfeeding. She will describe the presentation, diagnosis, management and treatment of a patient who was diagnosed with breast cancer while breastfeeding. She will explore applications of the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine Clinical Protocol #34, “*Breast Cancer and Breastfeeding*”.

Learning objectives:

Recognize the importance of ensuring resolution of mastitis.

Explain radiological staging studies compatibility with breastfeeding.

Identify therapies that are likely to require cessation of lactation and assist weaning.

Missed last month’s Grand Rounds on breast cancer and breastfeeding? [Register for on-demand access](#) today.

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!)

ABM's Annual International Meeting This November

This Wednesday, October 2, marks the middle of the work week and the last day to take advantage of our early bird reduced pricing for the ABM 29th Annual International Meeting to be held November 14-17, 2024, in Schaumburg, IL, USA. Registration includes access to educational sessions, workshops, posters, exhibits, and CE/CME/CERPS opportunities. [View the schedule.](#)



[Hear from #ABM24 Speaker Allyson Wessells!](#)



[Learn More!](#)

Do you know of an institution in compliance with the [WHO International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes](#) that may be interested in exhibiting at ABM's Annual International Meeting? Send them [more information](#) or [email ABM!](#)

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

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!



We would be immensely grateful for donations to support our Silent Auction. All contributions will allow us to sustain and enhance our efforts to provide high-quality resources.

Looking for ways to contribute? Consider the following:

1. Are you a crafter? We'd greatly appreciate your handcrafted items in our auction.
2. Are you an artist? What person in the ABM community wouldn't enjoy having a piece designed by one of their peers in their home or office?
3. Have a vacation home? We know someone would certainly be excited to bid on a week at a unique destination.
4. Are you a sports fan and have season tickets? Chances are, other fans within the community would be interested.
5. Think local. Anything unique to your part of the world would make for a nice item to complete our action.
6. Perhaps your hobby is amateur photography, and you've got great photos that could be framed and included!
7. Get creative; chances are you have a fabulous idea that we haven't thought of! You may also purchase an item from our [Amazon Wishlist](#).



Have You Seen This?

Speaking of a "Village" . . .

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

We learned from the PCORI study that a top priority of the Black community in the U.S. is the engagement of a village of support. The paper we are highlighting today looks at a form of a “village” that exists in almost every community in the U.S. and in the world by considering the Christian church as a potential vector and stronghold of breastfeeding support in the United States’ Black community.

Authors of “Breastfeeding Attitudes and Social Support among Christian African Americans” canvassed 101 Black Christians in the Boston, MA, USA, area to explore attitudes and beliefs surrounding breastfeeding using a qualitative data analysis structure. The respondents were 74% female and 37% were 45 years old or greater, mostly Catholic. Themes included:

- Breastfeeding as beneficial and natural
- Willingness to provide favorable support to fellow breastfeeding congregants
- Biblical support for breastfeeding
- A desire to establish Christian leadership around breastfeeding

The vast majority of respondents indicated they would be willing to recommend six months of exclusive breastfeeding to church members, friends, or peers, and that this action was supported by Christian teachings and traditions. Survey participants reported that Christian community gatherings were an important social vector and support for them personally, and that these venues could be used to promote breastfeeding. Ideas related to the promotion of breastfeeding included teaching about the Biblical support for breastfeeding during women's fellowship and discussing benefits of breastfeeding exclusivity, duration, and return to work. The authors concluded that the Black Christian community may be an emergent support vector for Black Christian women who choose to breastfeed.

Reader, have you thought about partnering with these vectors or “villages” of support (the religious and cultural institutions) in your community? This reviewer suggests that the application of the findings in this paper could extend to most mainstream religious groups with rare exception. One step further: your community may host cultural groups, based on ethnicity or country of origin, that are not necessarily religious, but share an interest in promoting maternal child health. We’ve included additional references on breastfeeding beliefs and support in the Jewish, Muslim, and cultural communities for your reference.

Again, we see the community has the answer.

References:

Alchalel, S., Zaitoon, H., Gover, A., Simmonds, A., Toropine, A., & Riskin, A. (2024). The Impact of Religious Beliefs on Early Lactation in Israeli Mothers. *Breastfeeding Medicine*, 19(7), 525–533. <https://doi.org/10.1089/bfm.2024.0027>

Cook EJ, Powell F, Ali N, Penn-Jones C, Ochieng B, Randhawa G. Improving support for breastfeeding mothers: a qualitative study on the experiences of breastfeeding among mothers who reside in a deprived and culturally diverse community. *Int J Equity Health*. 2021 Apr 6;20(1):92. doi: 10.1186/s12939-021-01419-0. PMID: 33823848; PMCID: PMC8025360.

Gyamfi, A., Jefferson, U. T., O’Neill, B., Lucas, R., Spatz, D. L., & Henderson, W. A. (2024). Breastfeeding Attitudes and Social Support Among Christian African Americans. *Breastfeeding Medicine*, 19(5), 333–339. <https://doi.org/10.1089/bfm.2023.0277>

Hassan, S. M., Leavey, C., Rooney, J. S., & Puthussery, S. (2020). A qualitative study of healthcare professionals' experiences of providing maternity care for Muslim women in the UK. *BMC Pregnancy Childbirth*, 20(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12884-020-03096-3>

Question of the Month Answer:

ANSWER: D

The answer is D, the creation of "villages of support" for breastfeeding families with the integration of community-based organizations. The incorrect answers (A, B, and C) are common breastfeeding outcome measures that we, as scientists, tend to focus on but may not be relevant to the population we hope to serve.



Inside ABM

Newsletter Chair: Paula K. Schreck, MD NABBLM-C IBCLC FABM

Questions: Email ABM Staff at abm@bfmed.org

Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine
8735 W. Higgins Road, Suite 300
Chicago, IL 60631
(800) 990.4ABM (USA toll free)
(847) 375.4726 (phone)
(847) 375.4713 Attn: ABM (fax)
abm@bfmed.org | www.bfmed.org

Connect with Us:

Facebook

Twitter

LinkedIn