

Guidance on Offering Breastfeeding Peer Counseling



WIC's Breastfeeding Peer Counseling (BFPC) program is changing how we support women's desire to breastfeed. Based on research with thousands of women in Oregon, the focus of BFPC is on preventing breastfeeding problems by equipping women with the skills and information they need to successfully breastfeed.

This enhanced support will come primarily from your agency BFPC Coordinator and peer counselors in the form of 4 to 5 monthly facilitated group sessions for pregnant women with similar due dates. These sessions will begin in a woman's 4th or 5th month of pregnancy and continue until the month before she delivers. Peer counseling activities are in addition to her 2nd NE contact. Certifiers may play a role in this process by helping to determine which pregnant women are most appropriate for the BFPC program and then offering her this added WIC benefit.

Who is our target audience for BFPC services?

Pregnant women who:

- Are being enrolled up through their 5th month of pregnancy (Weeks gestation can be found at TWIST → Certification → Medical Data tab);
- Plan to breastfeed their baby; and,
- Are able to commit to the 5 monthly group sessions

How would this be offered?

During the prenatal enrollment process, discuss mom's plans for feeding her baby, and assess whether to offer peer counseling. Here are some ideas to consider when talking to moms about peer counseling:

- You would be enrolled in a group for pregnant women that are all due at about the same time as you are.
- During the sessions, we will talk about the most common things that trip people up during their pregnancies and in the first six months after their baby is born
- Since we knew that we couldn't fit everything you might want to know in a single one hour class, we put together a series of 5 sessions to give you enough time to really explore things of interest to the group.
- Once a month, the same group of pregnant women will get together (at this place, time) and share what's happening now in your pregnancies, learn amazing things about your body and baby, explore ways to keep your relationships together after the baby is born, learn about practices in the hospital that can help or hurt early bonding with your baby, and of

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course we'll talk about breastfeeding.

- These sessions can give you the chance to break away from your other responsibilities and have dedicated time just to think about how you want things to be with your baby.

Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Session Topics

Session 1: Congratulations, You're Pregnant! Now What? (Offered in 4th month of pregnancy)

Session 2: Your Amazing Body and Fascinating Baby! (Offered in 5th month of pregnancy)

Session 3: And Baby Makes Three but What About Me? (Offered in 6th month of pregnancy)

Session 4: Mommy: A Baby's Natural Habitat (Offered in 7th month of pregnancy)

Session 5: The Pre-Party Before the Big Event! (Offered in 8th month of pregnancy)

TWIST Peer Counseling Screening Question

A question on the prenatal Health History Questionnaire in TWIST will be used to collect the woman's response to the offer of peer counseling.

Question: "Peer Counselor Offered?"

Possible responses:

- **Accepted** indicates the woman was offered the opportunity to receive peer counseling services and accepted.
- **Not Offered** indicates the woman was not offered peer counseling services because it was not appropriate (e.g. not planning to breastfeed, weeks gestation, caseload management reasons).
- **Declined** indicates the woman was offered the opportunity to receive peer counseling services and decided not to participate or was unsure if she wanted to participate at this time.

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Scheduling for 2nd Nutrition Education or High Risk Counseling

Women enrolled in the BFPC program need to receive the same services that other participants do. Your agency will have a procedure for scheduling peer counseling participants for voucher issuance, 2nd Nutrition Education, and to see the WIC Nutritionist if they are high risk. Ask your WIC Coordinator or training supervisor about that procedure.

Example of Scheduling for Peer Counseling

LMP =1/15/11, EDD calculated by TWIST as 10/22/11, Cert End date 12/31/11

Month	Standard WIC appointments	BFPC eligibility when enrolled in WIC	Month BFPC sessions offered
January – LMP			
February – 1 st mo		PC eligible	
March – 2 nd mo		PC eligible	
April – 3 rd mo	Enroll in WIC – Issue vouchers for April, May, June	PC eligible	
May- 4 th mo		PC eligible	PC Session 1
June – 5 th mo	2 nd NE and voucher issuance for July, August, September	PC eligible if can attend PC Session 2	PC Session 2
July – 6 th mo		Not PC eligible	PC Session 3
August – 7 th mo		Not PC eligible	PC Session 4
September – 8 th mo	2 nd NE and voucher issuance for October, November, December	Not PC eligible	PC Session 5
October – 9 th mo Delivery		Not PC eligible	
November – 1 mo PP		Not PC eligible	
December – 2 mo PP	Certification Due	Not PC eligible	