

Letter to the Editor

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BREASTFEEDING WEEK CELEBRATIONS AT ESI HOSPITALS**Pisudde PM¹, Shamshad Ahmad¹, Ramkesh Prasad¹, Ashish Yadav¹, Dutt Rekha²**¹Assistant professor, Department of Community Medicine, ESI-PGIMSR, ESIC Medical College and ESIC hospital² Professor and Head, ESI-PGIMSR, ESIC Medical College and ESIC hospital*Corresponding Author:*

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Sir,

In August 2014, the Department of Community Medicine celebrated breastfeeding week in our hospital(ESIC hospital, Joka) and field practice area (ESI hospital budge budge) which is our Urban health training centre in southern part of Kolkata. The theme for this year is “Breastfeeding: A Winning Goal for Life!” The theme for this year's World Breastfeeding Week asserts the importance of increasing and sustaining the Protection, Promotion and Support of Breastfeeding

for achieving the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) and improving child survival and nutrition in the Post 2015 development agenda of sustainable development goals.¹ To begin with, we referred to National Family Health Survey-3 data and tried to find out the status of breastfeeding practices in our areas. We found that percentage of children who received breastfeeding in one hour was just 23.7%.² . District level health survey shows that percentage of children who

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received breastfeeding in one hour is 38.5% only while that the Mothers who received any antenatal check-up is 96.1%³ This signifies poor implementation of breastfeeding policies in health care facilities and also signifies the missed opportunity to health educate the mother and her relatives about importance of exclusive breastfeeding. In the settings, where the ANC check up is high, the staff of healthcare facilities should ensure education of the mothers regarding exclusive breastfeeding, positioning, and attachment of infant to the breast while providing the ANC care and same should be continued after delivery. To achieve this, staff of the health care facility should be educated and trained in the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, positioning, and attachment of breast. Hence, as a part of breastfeeding week celebrations, we decided to conduct one-day workshop for the staff nurse working in maternity and paediatric wards and OPD of the ESIC hospital Joka and ESI hospital budge budge. We used this time to explain how important is exclusive breastfeeding and how does it influences neonatal mortality by decreasing it six times if exclusive breastfeeding is given.⁴ We showed how the mother can position the child and attach the child to the breast. We used an Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illness (IMNCI) guidelines,

which is recommended under National Rural Health Mission (NRHM). We could offer these skills-based training to 44 staff nurse of two hospital and 4 ward ayaa from ESI budge budge hospital. We used photographs, Power Point presentations and videos. We also emphasized the importance of breastfeeding week and its theme. We also emphasize on stopping or discontinuation of use of infant milk substitute, feeding bottles and infant foods which is also stated by government of India, in 1992 (IMS act) as provided by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), India. Faculty of Community Medicine department, of which one is trained in IMNCI strategy, conducted the sessions.

We also performed pledge ceremony for all the participants as directed by World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA). The written pledge was signed by the Incharges and were sent to WABA for the information, due to which we were able to receive the international certification for breast feeding celebration for the both hospitals. We are really thankful to the Dean and Medical Suprentendent(MS) of ESIC hospital and also the MS of ESI Budge Budge for giving us the platform for celebrating the breast feeding week. We hope, in future,

these paramedical staff will ensure exclusive breastfeeding and promote correct breastfeeding practices among the

mothers visiting to ESIC and ESI hospitals.

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