

ABSTRACT

Knowledge Attitudes And Practices of Breastfeeding Among Health Care Workers In Selected Hospitals In Jamaica

Violet D. Griffith

The decline in breastfeeding has contributed significantly to infant morbidity and mortality worldwide. This has captured the attention of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) who have identified corrective strategies. Jamaica, like many other developing countries has experienced the effects of this decline and has adopted strategies to protect, promote and support breastfeeding. These include implementing the "Ten Steps' to Successful Breastfeeding" and adopting the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative. As an initial step, the Ministry of Health has embarked on an aggressive training programme in Lactation Management for health care workers.

The aim of this project was to determine the knowledge, attitudes and practices of the health care workers in selected hospitals being prepared to adopt the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative.

A survey was carried out in selected hospitals of two categories, those being prepared for the initiative and those which are not being prepared, 112

health care workers involved in the care of patients in the maternity ward were interviewed.

Mean scores of knowledge, attitudes and practices were relatively high. Health workers in the hospitals being prepared for the initiative had higher scores in all three areas than those not being prepared. Although the association between knowledge and attitudes and knowledge and practices did not appear to be significant, there was a strong positive relationship between attitudes and practices.

There is the indication for continued training to increase the knowledge base and practices to complement their positive attitudes.