



**WOMEN'S**  
**HEALTH**  
*Action*

# Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Certification

# Breastfeeding (BF) Recommendations & Rates

- World Health Organisation (WHO) – BF until 2 years and beyond
- NZ Ministry of Health - BF for 12 months or longer

## Overall NZ BF Rates (Plunket):

- 6 weeks – 65%
- 3 months – 54%
- 6 months – 26%

***Despite these recommendations, a breastfeeding toddler is rare!***



# Paid Employment & Breastfeeding

- The % of mothers BF decreases with the return to paid employment (Fein & Roe, 1998)
- Return to work rates for women with a child aged less than 12 months are increasing
- Between 1991 and 2006 these rates increased from 23-37% (Stats NZ)

***More women are returning to work,  
sooner after childbirth!***



# Legislation

April 2009 – Employment Relations (Breaks, Infant Feeding and Other Matters) Amendment Act

*Employers must provide breaks and facilities, where practicable for the purposes of breastfeeding or expressing breastmilk*

Other legislation that supports BF:

- Paid Parental Leave and Employment Protection Amendment Bill
- Employment Relations (Flexible Working Arrangements) Amendment Act



Breastfeeding - my best role ever.

World Breastfeeding Week 1-7 August 2009

# WHA Research

Make or Break: Payne and James, 2008

BF after returning to work can be facilitated by:

- Allowing the child to be brought to work
- Permitting worksite spaces to be used for BF or expressing
- Allowing mothers time to BF or express

When this support was not available mothers felt discouraged from returning to work and/or continuing to BF after returning to work



# Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace (BFW) Certification

- MoH funded initiative:
  - Revised employers pack
  - International research on BF and paid work
  - BFW Standard
  - Auditing tool
  - Pilot with three employers



# WHA Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Certification



Built on four pillars:

1. Time
  - Paid breaks
2. Facilities
  - Access to space either on or off site
3. Systems
  - BF policy
4. Culture
  - Liaison person

Founded on:

- International best practice
- Wide stakeholder consultation

# GE Money: Implementation

## Time:

- Brief ALL staff on access to PAID BF breaks prior to taking Parental Leave
- Managing breaks within rosters
- Ensuring that Managers are FACILITATING breaks
- Allow for flexibility in lieu of breaks e.g. late start and early finish times

# Case Study: GE Money



- New building & available facilities
- Experience with employees returning to work whilst BF
- Motivated management
- Already had Infant Feeding Policy

# GE Money: Implementation

## Facilities:

- Ensure that the space has privacy
- Easily accessible
- Comfortable

***Good facilities at work can make a real difference, but it is not the most important aspect of a BF Friendly Workplace.***

***A supportive culture can overcome a lack of facilities.  
A non-supportive culture can impede the use of the best facilities.***

# GE Money: Implementation

## Systems:

- Ensure there is a BF Policy and regularly review it
  - *Policy in place but had not been reviewed in five years*
- Identify an appropriate Liaison (Support) Person
- Ensure this person is trained/suitable for the role
- Integrate the initiative into current HR documentation
- Provide information and training to Managers
- Seek feedback from employees
- Have a procedure for complaints
- Remained informed of changes to legislation

# GE Money: BF Policy

- **Lactation Breaks:** All employees will be entitled to two paid thirty minute breaks per eight hour shift for the purpose of infant feeding.
  - Infant feeding is defined as expressing and storage of breast milk, breastfeeding an infant in the facility provided at GE Money or travelling to breastfeed an infant at another facility.
  - Lactation breaks may be taken at any time including at the beginning or end of a shift or directly before or after other scheduled breaks – however, it is the responsibility of the employee to agree with their leader the timing of lactation breaks. For employees with allocated break times, timing of lactation breaks must be agreed, where reasonably practicable, prior to the issuance of rosters.
- **Infant Feeding Room:** Where practicable an infant feeding room will be provided on site at GE Money.
  - This room is to be used for the purpose of infant feeding as defined by this policy. Where an infant feeding room is not provided, employees should speak with their Leader who will liaise with their Human Resources representative to find other suitable space.
- In addition to the facilities outlined above, all employees considering parental leave are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the flexible work options available through the GE Money Flexible Working Arrangements Policy.

# GE Money: Implementation

## Culture:

- Adequately communicate the initiative regularly
  - *Communications plan*
- Foster positive attitudes towards breastfeeding
  - *E.g. through a good BF policy, newsletters and HR documentation*
- Treat bullying seriously

# GE Money: Certification



GE Money receiving certificate

1. Self assessment
2. Third party audit
3. Address corrective actions
4. Certified
5. Re-audited bi-annually



# Where From Here?

The WHA BFW is one of very few voluntary standards/certification of its kind worldwide.

WHA would like to:

- Develop a brand and website for the standard
- Continue to promote and encourage the implementation of the standard
- Develop a self sustaining funding model