

New Food Choices Support Breastfeeding

An overview of the Breastfeeding Review

What is a Breastfeeding Review?

A Breastfeeding Review is an assessment of how breastfeeding is going. It must happen when a breastfeeding woman is requesting infant formula, or asks for an increase in the amount of formula she is already receiving from WIC. It may also happen whenever a breastfeeding woman has questions, whether she is requesting infant formula or not. The purpose of the review is to address any concerns and help find solutions that enable her to continue to breastfeed, and to minimize/delay the use of formula. Our goal is to help our moms successfully breastfeed.

Who can do a Breastfeeding Review?

Only Competent Professional Authorities (CPA's, including certifiers, nurses and nutritionists) trained in providing breastfeeding support may do a Breastfeeding Review.

Why do we have to do a Breastfeeding Review?

Federal regulations state that the CPA must prescribe food packages and formula cannot be routinely issued to breastfeeding infants. USDA has told us that a Breastfeeding Review must be done before a breastfeeding infant is issued infant formula.

What does the breastfeeding review look like?

It is a conversation between WIC staff trained in breastfeeding support and a breastfeeding woman about how breastfeeding is going and looks like this....

The CPA:

1. Establishes rapport with the client

Greets the woman by name and introduces self and informs her of the reason for the visit. "I heard you are having some breastfeeding concerns" or "You've come in asking for formula – I'd like to hear what concerns you have about breastfeeding."

Note: do not use the statement: "Before you get formula you have to talk to"

The CPA continues the conversation in a way that respects the client's culture. Using a non-judgmental and helpful approach engages the woman and allows a safe environment where she can discuss how she is feeding her infant and what her plans are for continued breastfeeding.

The CPA uses active listening skills to find out why the client is requesting formula.

2. Affirms the client's feelings or concerns.

Affirmation shows the woman that the CPA has heard her concerns, and other moms have had the same concerns. Statements such as "I am so sorry that you and baby are having

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trouble breastfeeding”, or “many moms feel that way in the early days of breastfeeding” can go along way towards putting her at ease.

3. Engages the woman in a discussion while offering support and encouragement to continue breastfeeding.

The CPA:

- Allows her to share concerns and what solutions she has already tried.
- Does not dominate the discussion.
- Targets education to the woman’s current concerns and avoids providing unneeded information.
- Discusses the contents of any breastfeeding materials provided to her.
- Asks for the woman’s feedback on the usefulness of the information.

4. Determines the amount of formula to issue, if any.

If the woman is convinced that providing formula is the only way the problem will be solved, or if the CPA determines that formula is needed, then issue the minimum amount of formula needed. The woman must be informed that adding infant formula will result in decreased milk production and may eventually end breastfeeding.

5. Encourages the woman to continue to breastfeed, even if formula is issued.

Some breastfeeding is better than no breastfeeding. If a woman breastfeeds just one time a day it will improve her health and the health of the baby. Sometimes moms are heart broken if they can’t fully breastfeed (like in the case of a breast reduction) and just want to quit. If you can encourage these women to continue to do some breastfeeding they will thank you later when they are not as hurt and disappointed.

6. Refers her for further breastfeeding follow-up if needed.

If the CPA determines that the mom and baby are in need of medical follow-up, or lactation help is not available in the clinic that can adequately address the problem, staff should refer the client back to her medical provider, and/or for lactation help using a clinic resource list.

7. Documents the Breastfeeding Review.

Document that the Breastfeeding Review was completed in the Notes section of the client record, either the mom’s or baby’s chart. Title the note Breastfeeding Review and document the problem or concern, the intervention (what you did to help), whether or not formula was issued and any other information you feel is important.

Do not document the Breastfeeding Review on the Flow Sheet, in Check Notes, or any other fields, as this information needs to be accessible in the client’s record for HR contacts and Certifications.

The Breastfeeding Review fulfils the Second Contact requirement when done in person by clinic staff.

8. If there is no CPA trained in breastfeeding support clinic staff shall:

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- Affirm the mom's concerns and explain that the staff who can determine which food package to issue are not available.
- Encourage the woman to continue breastfeeding and inform her that adding formula to her infant's diet may decrease her ability to make milk.
- Offer support to her within your skill level.
- Schedule the woman as soon as possible for a time when the CPA is available to do a Breastfeeding Review or refer to community resources to complete the Breastfeeding Review, if available.
- Offer to have a CPA call her as soon as possible.
- Suggest she use community resources, food benefits, or cash for formula, if needed.

Additional information

The breastfeeding review may include weighing the baby, correcting latch, reviewing feeding and stooling patterns and/or reviewing normal baby behavior. What happens during this review is driven by the client's concerns and/or breastfeeding problems. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Because of the varied needs of breastfeeding women, it is critical that all staff have adequate training, knowledge and resources to address concerns.

Four common reasons why women quit breastfeeding are:

- Concerns about milk production
- Sore nipples
- Not understanding how breastfeeding works
- Work and/or school

Please see handout "Breastfeeding resources for staff" for information on staff development.

For persons with disabilities this publication is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 1-800-841-1410.



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