



Annual Report  
May 30, 2018



## Annual Report for January 2017 - December 2017

The Alberta Breastfeeding Committee (ABC) is a team of health care providers, independent breastfeeding experts, and consumers who are dedicated to protecting, promoting, and supporting breastfeeding in Alberta.

### Our Vision

Breastfeeding is the norm in Alberta.

### Our Mission

The ABC will provide leadership and resources to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding in Alberta as the cultural and biological norm for children, mothers, families, and communities.

### Operating Principles and Core Values

#### Excellence

The members of the ABC offer unique expertise and a commitment to protecting, promoting, and supporting breastfeeding through the lens of the Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI)

#### Collaboration

The members of the ABC collaborate with agencies, government teams, and organizations to implement and maintain the Baby-Friendly Initiative

### ABC Board Members 2017

Heather Anderson [1910on4th@gmail.com](mailto:1910on4th@gmail.com) (2016)  
 Jan Anderson [jan.anderson@telus.net](mailto:jan.anderson@telus.net) (2014)  
 Shannon Anderson [sdanderson0612@gmail.com](mailto:sdanderson0612@gmail.com) (2015)  
 Eileen Chuey [ejchuey@gmail.com](mailto:ejchuey@gmail.com) (September 2016)  
 Darlene Henderson [dsphenderson@shaw.ca](mailto:dsphenderson@shaw.ca) (2012)  
 Susan Johnson [sueleahj@gmail.com](mailto:sueleahj@gmail.com) (2012)  
 Catherine MacPherson [katemac@shaw.ca](mailto:katemac@shaw.ca) (2015)  
 Linda Dionne Marcoux [linda.marcoux@ahs.ca](mailto:linda.marcoux@ahs.ca) (2011)  
 Dianne Nikiforuk [ronaldrnikiforuk@mac.com](mailto:ronaldrnikiforuk@mac.com) (2005)  
 Joy Omeje [joyomeje200@yahoo.com](mailto:joyomeje200@yahoo.com) (2016)  
 Jennifer Splaine [Jennifer.splaine@gmail.com](mailto:Jennifer.splaine@gmail.com) (2011)  
 Maxine Scringer-Wilkes [Maxineswilkes@icloud.com](mailto:Maxineswilkes@icloud.com) (2012)  
 Anna Tumouth [annamarietad@hotmail.com](mailto:annamarietad@hotmail.com) (2015)  
 Annie Wong [anniewong0715@gmail.com](mailto:anniewong0715@gmail.com) (2014)

### New Members in 2017

Noreen Blachly [nblachly@telus.net](mailto:nblachly@telus.net)  
 Alona Fortier [Fortier\\_alona@hotmail.com](mailto:Fortier_alona@hotmail.com)  
 Annette Slobinyk [Annette.slobinyk@ahs.ca](mailto:Annette.slobinyk@ahs.ca)  
 Kimberly Taylor [wickedfetch@hotmail.com](mailto:wickedfetch@hotmail.com)

Alberta Health Representative-Susan Nolt [susan.nolt@gov.ab.ca](mailto:susan.nolt@gov.ab.ca) (2016)

### **Board Executive**

Maxine Scringer-Wilkes (Chair 2016) - Calgary  
 Jennifer Splaine (Secretary 2016, Past Chair) - Fort McMurray  
 Annie Wong (Treasurer 2015) – Calgary  
 Shannon Anderson (Director 2016, Treasurer 2017) – Edmonton  
 Eileen Chuey (Director 2016) – Calgary  
 Dianne Nikiforuk (Director 2016-Past Secretary) – Drayton Valley

### **Annual Report from the Chairperson**

#### **Background**

The Alberta Breastfeeding Committee is a group of individuals dedicated to protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding. Current, evidence based research clearly recognizes the positive health, economic and environmental outcomes experienced when families receive services offering the standard of care provided by facilities awarded the “Baby-Friendly Initiative” international designation. The ABC is committed to promoting the Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) and is recognized by the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (BCC) as the provincial authority in Alberta.

#### **Membership**

The Alberta Breastfeeding Committee is open to anyone that shares an interest in protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding. Members are not affiliated with any products or marketing that would be considered a violation of the World Health Organization International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes.

The Alberta Breastfeeding Committee requires no membership fee at this time. The voting members are all inclusive. At the time of this report there are 12 active members, The Alberta Breastfeeding Committee would like to acknowledge and thank the following past members for their hard work, dedication and contribution to ACC during 2017 Heather Anderson, Kathleen Arnold, Lorissa Jones, Joy Omeje, Kimberly Taylor, and Anna Tumouth.

The board acknowledged the sudden passing of our friend and colleague Darlene Henderson in March 2017. Darlene was a valued member of ABC; she was a knowledgeable, strong supporter and advocate of breastfeeding families in Alberta for more than 30 years.

#### **Website**

Website maintenance and updates completed as necessary.

#### **Facebook**

590 total followers including Canada 541, USA 27, Jordan, Greece, Australia, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Mexico, New Zealand.

#### **Financial Accountability**

The ABC ensures all funds are monitored and controlled. Annie Wong and Shannon Anderson oversaw the treasury responsibilities for 2017. Please see attached Financial Statement.

### Activities of the Alberta Breastfeeding Committee

- ABC met regularly by teleconference with (8) meetings held in 2017.
- AGM April 2017
- Best Practice series
- Conference "*Supplementation to Protect Breastfeeding*"
- Government engagement
- Community engagement and partnerships
- Ongoing support of BFI advancement in Alberta

### Education

#### Alberta Breastfeeding Committee Best Practice - Education Opportunities 2017

The Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) is an integrated approach for hospitals and community health services, based on the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, which provides ten evidenced-based steps to optimally support maternal-child health for all mothers and babies. For more information on what the Baby-Friendly Initiative means, visit the World Health Organization (WHO) or the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada websites. [http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/infantfeeding\\_recommendation/en/](http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/infantfeeding_recommendation/en/) [www.breastfeedingcanada.ca](http://www.breastfeedingcanada.ca) or <http://breastfeedingalberta.ca/>

With the principles of BFI informing our themes, ABC offered two teleconference sessions and one full day conference in 2017.

#### Teleconferences

ABC Best Practice Series Teleconference #5

***BFI Step #1 Have a written infant feeding policy that I routinely communicated to all staff, health care provider and volunteers.***

Theme: 'Breastfeeding Policy: The Right Mix to Write It'- Presented Dr. Louise Dumas

ABC Best Practice Series Teleconference #6

***BFI Step #5 Assist mothers to maintain lactation should they face challenges including separation from their infants.***

***Step #6 Support mothers to exclusively breastfeed for the first six months, unless supplements are medically indicated***

Other BFI steps are related to IYCF-E. See [www.Safelyfed.ca](http://www.Safelyfed.ca) Website for more information.

Theme: Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies (IYCF-E) Presented by Jodine Chase and Michelle Pensa Branco.

#### ABC Conference 2017

Title: ***Supplementation to Protect Breastfeeding.***

This theme addressed several of the best practice steps of BFI. Below are the most relevant please see the BCC website for more information on BFI.

***Step 6 Support mothers to exclusively breastfeed for the first six months, unless***

Supplements are *medically* indicated.

**Step 7** Facilitate 24 hour rooming-in for all mother-infant dyads: mothers and infants remain together.

**Step 8** Encourage baby-led or cue-based breastfeeding. Encourage sustained breastfeeding beyond six months with appropriate introduction of complementary foods.

**Presenter**, Kathy O’Grady Venter. A registered nurse and retired midwife, International Board certified Lactation Consultant, BFHI/BFI Lead Assessor for the BCC. In 2010 and 2013, Kathy was the recipient of the Canadian Lactation Consultant Association Award for Clinical Excellence.

### **Conference Objectives:**

1. Identify medical reasons for supplementation
2. Facilitate informed decision-making
3. Protect breastfeeding and implement a feeding plan
4. Support families who choose to supplement for non–medical reasons

Members of the ABC hosted participants at the University of Alberta Lister Conference Center. Kathy led participants through physiology, practical tips, clinical scenarios, and clinical skills incorporating clinical best practices for ways to protect breastfeeding.

### **Government Engagement**

June 2017- ABC was invited to the Legislature building by the Minister of Health’s office to engage in a discussion about BFI in Alberta.

October 2017- ABC was invited to the Legislature building to meet with the Honourable Minister Brandy Payne at the to discuss BFI and also to witness the signing of the Breastfeeding Week Declaration.

Ministry of Health Representative Susan Nolt attended ABC Conference in September.

### **Community Engagement**

ABC in partnership with Calgary Breastfeeding Matters Group-Foundation and NorthernStar Mother’s milk bank hosted a viewing of “MILK- born into this world” the movie. Following the movie, director Noemi Weiss was available via SKYPE to join in the discussion addressing the commercialization and controversies surrounding infant feeding all over the world, with the audience and panel members Nicole Ahmed and Jeanette Festival.

### **Communication**

- The ABC website was reorganized and updated by Dianne and Alana Nikiforuk. The ABC would like to thank them for the countless volunteer hours they invested into making the website esthetically pleasing, informative and user-friendly. Maintenance of the ABC website [www.breastfeedingalberta.ca](http://www.breastfeedingalberta.ca) the events calendar was managed by multiple board members.
- The Alberta Breastfeeding Network listserv is an avenue to share and exchange knowledge about breastfeeding related topics open to anyone in Alberta who is a breastfeeding supporter. Anyone in Alberta can be a member and any member can share information via the listserv. Currently there are 190 members of ABN. <http://www.mailman.srv.ualberta.ca/mailman/listinfo/albertabreastfeedingnetwork>

The Alberta Breastfeeding Network listerv is moderated by Maxine Scringer-Wilkes to ensure no unsolicited advertising is processed.

- Jennifer Splaine manages the ABC Facebook page and provides ongoing maintenance and posts. Currently there are 590 followers, 531 Canada, 27 USA, 5 Jordan, 3 Greece, New Zealand
- General email inquiries to [www.breastfeedingalberta.ca](http://www.breastfeedingalberta.ca) are received continually from mothers, health care providers, and businesses via our website. The secretary or the chairperson provides responses.

### **Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (BCC0**

The ABC has one assessor Eileen Chuey, and 2 assessors candidates in training Jennifer Splaine and Maxine Scringer-Wilkes. Assessors and candidates are involved in BFI assessments and training opportunities provided on a regular basis by the BCC.

### **The Baby-Friendly Initiative in Alberta**

Three Hospitals attained the Baby-Friendly Initiative Designation in Alberta. High River Hospital was the first in the spring, followed by two Covenant Health Hospitals, Grey Nuns, which is the largest full service hospital to attain the designation in Canada, followed by Bonneyville Community Hospital.

### **Strategic Plan 2017-2022**

The board re-wrote the ABC's strategic plan to reflect the focus on our work of advancing The Baby-Friendly Initiative in Alberta. The updated strategic plan for 2017-2022 is available on the ABC website.

### **Provincial /Territorial BFI Implementation Committee Report on 2017 Activities**

Report written by Heidi Boyd, Chair of the P/T Committee of the BCC

Alberta PT Representative is Jennifer Splaine and Susan Nolt from the Ministry of Health Office.

### **Background**

The Provincial/Territorial Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) Implementation Committee (P/T committee) is one of two standing committees of the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (BCC). Members, who represent all provinces and territories, as well as the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), participate in activities that build capacity and foster dialogue and collaboration toward the continued implementation of the BFI in Canada.

### **Meetings**

The P/T Committee held three regular meetings by conference call in 2017.

### **Activities**

The P/T committee provides a forum for ongoing dialogue, knowledge exchange and strategic collaboration across Canada through regular conference call meetings every two months, email discussion and sharing of key resources. Some regions also meet regularly to discuss common priorities. Representatives of the PT committee also participated in the BCC's September Strategic planning.

One of the main activities of the PT committee is to provide an opportunity for networking and knowledge exchange across jurisdictions and with other associations, organizations and committees on topics that relate to the implementation of the Baby-Friendly Initiative. The PT committee organizes a biannual National BFI Symposium as a cross-national forum for these purposes.

In 2018, a sub-committee of the PT committee was formed for this specific task. For the first time this sub-committee and its co-chairs (Lea Geiger and Heidi Boyd) developed a set of consistent organizational parameters for the Symposium including a designated email address and shared drive of all documentation required for the planning and implementation of the Symposium which was held in Moncton, New Brunswick on September 21 and 22. It was a sold out event, with a waiting list for attendance. We had over 125 delegates in attendance from almost all provinces and territories.

The two day Symposium allowed updates from all jurisdictions on their work toward BFI implementation as well as an opportunity to hear presenters from across the country and the United States on their expertise and experiences related to implementing BFI in their jurisdictions, facilities and organizations. The participant evaluations of the event were overwhelmingly positive and highlighted the quality of speakers that were recruited for the two days. The Symposium can also generate revenue to cover the operating costs of the BCC and in 2017 provided \$17,455.62 for BCC use. Special thanks go to the host province of NB and their large number of staff and volunteers who helped make this event such a success, particularly those who led the work in NB – Isabelle Melancon, Jessica Sargent, Donna Brown, Isabelle Doucet, Jessica Webster, Nancy Smith and Nathalie Lirette-Bourque. Thank you as well to additional PT Committee, Assessment Committee and Board members who participated in the sub-committee and helped to plan and implement this successful Symposium including Marina Green, Eileen Chuey and Louise Dumas. The next Symposium will be held in 2019, the location is to be determined.

PT Committee members also were pleased to offer screenings of the documentary “MILK – Born into this World” across the country in 2017. Some jurisdictions availed of a grant from TELUS to help increase the reach of these screenings throughout their jurisdiction. A screening was also hosted at the BFI Symposium with the film’s director Naomi Weiss on hand, via Skype, for a panel discussion.

The film MILK offers a perspective on the commercialization and controversies surrounding infant feeding all over the world. It explores the use of formula donations in crisis situations, the establishment of human milk banks, judgment that women may feel when feeding a baby infant formula, stigma toward women who breastfeed older children, challenges around breastfeeding in public places and even the impact infant feeding can have on child mortality. Screening this film in large and small centers across Canada helped to break down barriers in conversation around infant feeding and helped make strides toward changing the culture of infant feeding in Canada.

### **Committee members have shared highlights of work around the BFI in their Province or Territory: Alberta.**

AB is proud to have three hospital sites designated as Baby Friendly in 2017. These sites are High River Hospital, Covenant Health Grey Nuns and Covenant Health Bonnyville.

The Alberta Breastfeeding Committee hosted their annual conference September 29, 2017, 'Supplementation to Protect Breastfeeding' with guest speaker Kathy Venter. The committee also hosted two best practice teleconferences in 2017: 'Breastfeeding Policy: The Right Mix to Write It' with host Dr. Louise Dumas and "Infant Child and Youth Feeding in Emergencies" with host Jodine Chase and Michelle Pensa Branco. In June, the Committee received an invitation from the Minister of Health's office to engage and support breastfeeding in Alberta. In October, the committee was invited to the Legislature to meet with the honorable Brady Payne to discuss breastfeeding and to witness the Declaration of breastfeeding week being signed.

The full report from each provinces is available on the Breastfeeding Committee for

Canada's Website.