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**Chair Report May 2013 to April 2014**

The Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) in Ontario continues to work to provide support to organizations who are working toward or maintaining designation as well being a resource and advocate to other groups throughout the province, including people at the Ministry level.

As a result of No Time to Wait: The Healthy Kids Strategy, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MHLTC) made the announcement in September 2013 to invest $2.5 million to help families give their infants a sound nutritional start. BFI Ontario is involved in 2 of the 4 strategies, having representation on the steering committees.

* Supporting Ontario’s hospitals and community health care organizations with training, tools, guidance and resources to help them achieve the BFI designation. Toronto East General Hospital is the lead and is working with the Provincial Council of Maternal and Child Health as well as Best Start Health Nexus.
* Targeted support for mothers in population groups that have lower rates of breastfeeding – Best Start Health Nexus is the lead.

BFI Ontario has also had consultation with the MHLTC and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to support HBHC programs in the use of NCAST materials while meeting the standards of BFI.

We have continued to operate from the same Terms of Reference and revisions have been made in 2014. Many activities on the Logic Model are completed or in progress and updates have been made.

**Membership – lead Hiltrud Dawson**

We continue to offer single, agency and group memberships. More and more agencies are joining BFI Ontario. Specific things to report for this year are:

* We have not yet come to a conclusion regarding bundling BFI Ontario and BCC memberships.
* Membership fees are supporting many things; our teleconferences, our website, supporting the BFI EXPO, conference attendance for members taking the display to a conference.

Most health units now have an agency membership with multiple (2 – 9) members. We have gained new members from public health, community health centres, hospitals, doulas and lactation consultants. We continue to have a government representative.

Our membership has grown considerably this year. We now represent 427 individuals. We also have good representation across the province and one member from Manitoba.

Our membership consists of

* 55 individuals with single membership (15 new)
* 50 agency memberships representing 301 individuals (2 new)
* 2 groups representing 71 individuals (1 new)

Members come from health units, hospitals, CHC, universities and colleges, First Nations organizations, private and non-profit breastfeeding organizations or individuals, and other non-profits.

**Communications – Wendy Lahey**

In July 2013, the Membership/Communications role was divided to ease the workload of that position. Wendy is responsible for the minutes of the Executive Meetings and circulating communications to the BFI Ontario Membership. There are currently over 360 members included on the BFI Ontario email distribution list. BFI Ontario’s goal is to facilitate accurate and timely information to members regarding breastfeeding and the Baby-Friendly Initiative.

**BFI in Community Health Services – lead Grace Machado**

The Ontario BFI in CHS committee continues to strengthen it’s collaboration within the membership in 2013-14. There are now close to 50 community health services (including Public Health and Community Health agencies) in this committee, many of whom gather quarterly via teleconference to network, share resources and support one another’s journey towards achieving designation. This group was instrumental reaching out to their local community hospitals to encourage them to join the newly formed BFI Ontario Hospital Network Group. As more community health services achieve BFI Designation, this group will only strengthen their leadership to further mentor other organizations and really impact the culture across the province.

**BFI Hospital Network Group – Kim Ross and Doris Balcarras**

This group had their first teleconference in February 2014 and have created a Terms of Reference. They will continue to have teleconferences to support hospitals on the BFI journey.

 **Social Media – lead Karen Nielsen**

Karen Nielsen is currently the administrator of the BFI Ontario website. Dawn Hanes is beginning to learn to use the site as a co-administrator. The  website has resources that are available to all members. The resources are categorized by the 10 steps and the WHO code. Plans are underway to streamline the membership section so that people can submit the registration form along with their payment in a more user-friendly fashion. BFI Ontario is partnering with York Region for the BFI Expo 2015.  Event registrations will be done through the website. Changes are being made to Event Registration to make it more user-friendly and to provide mobile friendly access.  We have added many new resources to the website this year. We will continue to add any resources that members are willing to share.

 **BFI Ontario Assessment Committee–lead Marg LaSalle**

The BFI Ontario Assessment Committee has been busy over the past year in a number of venues. Marg La Salle, committee chair, is the first point of contact and both she and Kathy Venter represent Ontario on the National BFI Assessment Committee. The BFI Ontario Assessment Committee works in close collaboration with the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada BFI Assessment Committee for all stages of assessment.

Presently Ontario has 6 assessors, 3 assessor candidates who are part way through the process of becoming an assessor, and approximately 10 people who will be building capacity as new assessor candidates. The BFI Resource Team for Ontario currently has 17 members and the members of the resource team help with the implementation of BFI in Ontario.

An inventory of Ontario hospitals and community health services and their progress with the Baby-Friendly Initiative is kept by Marg La Salle. Reports are submitted every 6 months to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care.

As of March 31 2014, Ontario has a total of 20 designated facilities including 3 hospitals and 17 community health services. Six of the designated facilities have been successful in redesignation.

Hospitals

Grand River Hospital, Kitchener (2008/2013)

St. Joseph’s Health Care, Hamilton (2003/2010)

Toronto East General Hospital (2007/2012)

Community Health Services

Algoma Public Health (2010)

Centretown Community Health Centre (2012)

Chatham Kent Public Health (2010)

Halton Region Health Department (2009)

Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit (2014)

Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington Public Health (2013)

Niagara Region Public Health (2014)

North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (2011)

Ottawa Public Health (2013)

Oxford County Public Health (2014)

Peterborough County-City Health Unit (2008/2014)

Porcupine Health Unit (2014)

Region of Peel Public Health (2009)

Somerset West Community Health Centre (2007/2012)

Thunder Bay District Health Unit (2006/2011)

Toronto Public Health (2013)

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (2013)

Over the past year document reviews were completed for 9 facilities in Ontario. Four document reviews are currently in progress. The BFI Assessment Committee provided 5 Pre-Assessment site visits at facilities in Ontario from April 2013 –April 2014.

The BFI Ontario Assessment Committee has met with the Ontario Ministry several times in 2013 in regards to the implementation of the Baby-Friendly Initiative in hospitals and health units. BFI designation is an indicator to measure public health unit performance in accordance with the Accountability Agreement for 2011-2013 and reports to the Ministry are provided biannually. The BFI Assessment Committee has also been in consultation with the Healthy Kids Strategy, BFI Implementation Project in Ontario through teleconferencing, meetings, and review of written materials.

Mentoring facilities and providing support in the Baby-Friendly journey are important aspects of the work of the provincial BFI Assessment Committee. During the past year we received and responded to many email and telephone inquiries about the Baby-Friendly Initiative and WHO Code and subsequent WHA Resolutions as related to the Baby-Friendly Initiative. Additionally. a total of 6 capacity building visits were completed by assessors and 4 information sessions were completed by assessors and assessor candidates.

In February we launched our first “Ask An Assessor” teleconference for hospitals where registrants submitted questions which were answered by Kathy Venter. This event was well attended with over 50 participants. A second “Ask An Assessor” teleconference is scheduled for June 2014.

Over the past year committee members have also served as consultants for projects with the Better Outcomes Registry and Network (BORN) and Locally Driven Collaborative Projects (LDCP) - Breastfeeding Data Surveillance, Best Start, Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) and the Southwestern Ontario Maternal, Newborn, Child and Youth Network (CYN). An information session was also provided for the Provincial Women and HIV/AIDS Initiative.

**Political Advocacy – lead Lori Levere**

**Treasurer - lead Donna Zukiwski**

**Some additional activities of BFI Ontario:**

* BFI Ontario was represented on the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada Provincial/Territorial BFI Implementation Committee four teleconferences by Kim Ross or Anne Smith
* Completion of the Key Messages for BFI document. Hiltrud did a tremendous amount of work to prepare this and we are thankful to her for her time and expertise

We want to express our appreciation for all the work that is being done locally and provincially to promote BFI as well to support and assess organizations as they work to achieve and maintain BFI designation.

Respectfully submitted,

 

Kimberley Ross Anne Smith

Co Chairs of BFI Ontario