Strategic Pathway to Milk Depots in Hawai‘i
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Background
- Annually, if 90% of U.S. infants are exclusively breastfed through the first 6 months of life, we would save $13 billion and 1000 infant lives.
- The Hawaii Breastfeeding Report (2019) showed that Hawai‘i pays $45 million annually in combined medical, non-medical, and death related costs because <90% of its infants are exclusively breastfed for 6 months.
- Donor human milk can help families and the state achieve optimal breastfeeding rates (90% exclusive) for the health of Hawai‘i’s community.

Purpose
- The purpose of the project was to develop a strategic plan for opening donor human milk depots in Hawai‘i.

Methods
Under Sigma-Johnson & Johnson MCHNLA Fellow’s guidance, Breastfeeding Hawai‘i’s five board members implemented a strategic plan to open milk depots and local donor milk shipping supply sites across Hawai‘i over an 18-month period.
- First assess need. Researched data: CDC, Hawai‘i DOH, United States Breastfeeding Committee. Researched history of donor milk bank in Hawai‘i to understand reasons for previous closure.
- Identify barriers: Hesitancy from businesses to host a freezer for donor milk collection due to responsibilities.
- Develop alternate plans: Offer hosting local shipping supply sites.
- Provide community education: Develop pre/post quiz with educational webinar for wide distribution.
- Solicit for applications: Notify networks, breastfeeding friendly businesses, and community support partners of opportunity to participate.
- Select donor human milk shipping supply sites, and train sites on responsibilities of donor supplies and marketing.

Measures & Results
- First measurement: Number of milk depots and/or shipping supply sites opened and accessible to the community.
  - Result: 2
- Second measurement: Number of milk depots and/or shipping supply sites currently in application process.
  - Result: 4
- Third measurement: Demonstrated increased community knowledge regarding donor human milk in Hawai‘i.
  - Result: Number Completed- Pre-test:127; Post-test: 40.
  - A Mann-Whitney U Test revealed a significant increase in number of correct answers from the Milk Depot Pre-Test (Md = 7.00, n = 127.00) to the Milk Depot Post-Test (Md = 10.00, n = 40.00), U = 525.00, z = -7.69, p < .001, r = .60 indicating a large effect size.
- Fourth measurement: Number of healthcare providers and community members that directly benefited from the project.
  - Result: Health care providers: 151; Community Members: 58

Conclusions
An educational webinar distributed through social media is an effective method to increase community and healthcare provider knowledge about donor human milk.
Future work will be to:
- Open milk depot and/or shipping supply sites on all main islands.
- Establish donor human milk bank in Hawai‘i to meet community breast milk supplement needs.
- Normalize breastfeeding through increased culturally matched community support persons.

Leadership Journey

Thank you to Breastfeeding Hawai‘i for their support along this journey.
This work was completed for the Sigma – Johnson & Johnson Maternal Child Health Nurse Leadership Academy which is supported by Johnson & Johnson. The content and conclusions are those of the author.

References: