



**General Membership Meeting Minutes
February 6, 2019**

Central Jersey Family Health Consortium

Number of In-Person Attendees: 32

Number of Phone Call-Ins: 1

Attendees: Sign in sheet attached

Meeting called to order by Mary Turbek at 10:05 am

Welcome and Introductions

Mary asked us all to introduce ourselves and rate our mornings on a scale of 1-10. The majority of attendees rated their mornings between an 8 and a 10, and Mary marveled at how positive everyone was. Mary referenced the election held at the last general meeting and introduced the 2019 Trustees:

Cassandra Leahy, Jessica Libove, Ellen Maughan, Judy Schneider, Jill Wodnick, John Worobey.

President: Mary Turbek

Treasurer: Kay O'Keefe

Secretary: Ellen Shuzman

Mary then asked everyone present to share what their vision is regarding birth/breastfeeding and to discuss what their part is in that work. Each person took her turn speaking while in possession of Mary's big stick:

- Miriam Ruchman's vision is that all physicians have adequate breastfeeding education and would include that physicians demonstrate a minimum number of CMEs in it.
- Florence Rotondo's vision is that all hospitals comply with the NJ hospital regulations and that at least one-half of hospitals become Baby-Friendly by 2020. Florence expressed that we are still fighting the same problems of 40 years ago.
- Casi Leahy's vision is that there would be more collaboration and communication among breastfeeding supporters and among healthcare providers and even within hospital systems. Casi mentioned the Monmouth-Ocean Breastfeeding Consortium's collaborative work.
- Jill Wodnick expressed the need to develop breastfeeding-friendly child care centers in NJ and that this care should also extend into toddler care. Jill wants to see the sharing of best practices for child care professionals.

- Diane Procaccini stated that the USBC wants equity, but doesn't say how to accomplish it. She stated that interns from Capital Health's program couldn't get hours, especially those who were not RNs. Diane added that barriers stand in the way of achieving equity and that organizations need to develop scholarships to IBCLC candidates to help with the economic barriers.
- Piggybacking off of Diane's comment, Susan Fuchs spoke on the financial barriers to becoming an IBCLC, and the cost of the lactation pathway 2 program at Drexel.
- Lorraine Mejias mentioned that employers don't seem to have an awareness of pumping laws.
- Yarrow Willman Cole highlighted her work on breastfeeding and family leave laws, and told Lorraine about the fact sheet on the NJBC website. Everyone joined in on the discussion focusing on the new family leave law awaiting the the Governor's signature. Yarrow explained that the new law will increase wage reimbursement to 85% of weekly wage with a cap of \$850, with time off doubling to 12 weeks, which takes effect in July 2020. Dads will are also eligible to take family leave.
- Leslie Kowalski spoke about lactation as preventative care, and lamented that it isn't seen that way by society. She recommended "lactation checkups" so that moms could see LCs as a well-check, not just when there are problems. Discussion ensued about insurance.
- Kristine Galizio mentioned that doctors are focusing on numbers so that mothers of preemies aren't encouraged to keep trying to breastfeed. She emphasized the need for collaboration between lactation and nurses.
- Kaaba Chenault wants more moms to believe in themselves, and is focusing on helping one mom at a time. She also worried about how discouraging it can be with other providers who lack breastfeeding education. Lorraine mentioned that Kaaba helped her breastfeed in the hospital.
- Sarah Muller Robbins spoke about the importance of collaboration between hospitals, WIC and providers with a common goal of not giving out so much formula.
- Roseanne Motti spoke about the NY Milk Bank and their mission to see every parent be able to provide breastmilk for their babies. Discussion ensued regarding insurance coverage for donor milk. In NJ, unlike NY, straight Medicaid will not cover donor milk. Roseanne also told the group that the NY Breastfeeding Coalition provides scholarships for two IBCLC candidates each year.
- Sakinah Ishmael spoke about encouraging young mothers to see that breastfeeding is the first best thing that they can do for their babies. She also discussed the many road blocks mothers faced and highlighted the need for mothers to learn how to advocate for themselves and lose the "doctor is always right" mentality. She shared a story about how a mother was told at a childcare center that her baby needed to be weaned by 12 months.
- Bernadette LoPinto-Neil brought up her work with the NJ First Steps initiative where she is hoping to normalize breastfeeding among day care providers. She wants to find resources to help teach caregivers about the importance of breastfeeding, how to handle breastmilk, and how to include fathers.
- Vicki Nizin praised everyone's visions and told the group how inspired she felt. She then spoke about "breastfeeding deserts" and how she is striving to make her WIC an oasis for breastfeeding support and information. She also brought up her program that gives recognition to healthcare providers who are true or "first tier" breastfeeding supporters. She introduced her peer counselor, Ishmaine Saint Florant, and praised her ability to counsel women of color, especially Creole-speaking parents.

- Ishmaine Saint Florant in turn brought up the lack of breastfeeding care some parents are receiving in the hospitals, and emphasized the need for better collaboration between WIC offices and hospitals.
- Deb Schoch spoke about prenatal education “setting up” women for success, and lamented the lack of free prenatal education at OB offices. She believes that all prenatal breastfeeding education should be free.
- Bernadette Flynn Kelton spoke from the hospital perspective on the lack of prenatal education that most OBs even receive. At her hospital they are now doing prenatal consults, but this requires administrative buy-in regarding lactation as a public health issue.
- Mary Turbek’s mission is for the normalization of breastfeeding, not as a benefit, but as the norm that all babies deserve. All women deserve excellent care but systems are working against them. She is working with the Department of Health for more collaboration. She told the group that everyone’s comments gave her hope, and that she admires everyone’s resilience and persistence. She specifically thanked all the PCs who attended the meeting, and opened the floor for them to speak.
- Tamara Murga, a WIC PC, told the group how she visits all the local hospitals in her region, and mentioned her belief that pediatricians need to provide better initial feeding assessments for infants so that they can catch feeding problems earlier on.
- Yosefa Lebeau brought up the need for prenatal education so that more mothers could have confidence in themselves and their babies.
- Tina Brown spoke about her experiences with daycare providers’ lack of education about breastfeeding.
- Sekinah also mentioned that many women don’t know how to advocate for themselves and their breastfeeding relationship, so they switch to formula when doctors recommend it or out of fear of losing their jobs if they ask to pump.
- Mary Lou Moramarco commented that the size of the group at the meeting gave her hope for the future of lactation. She also brought up her work on licensure for LCs in NJ, and suggested that we develop a scale for pediatricians to learn when a referral to an LC is necessary.
- Ellen Maughan thanked everyone for the inspiration and the positivity, and spoke about ways to develop ideas into a movement for change. She mentioned the need for mothers to have space to tell their own stories, which is the best way to incite a movement from the ground up.

Mission and Vision Statements

Mary again thanked everyone for speaking and then went over the newly revised mission and vision statements created at the Board of Trustees meeting. She asked the group to recognize the work of some of the founding members of NJBC, such as Florence, Mary Lou, Ellen and Judy Schneider.

Statewide Breastfeeding Plan

Mary discussed the DOH grant through SNAP-Ed given to NJBC. The grant will find a project manager to create a statewide breastfeeding plan. She assured the group that everyone’s input was needed, and that we would be announcing focus groups to involve everyone from NJBC members to mothers and grandmothers.

Membership Policy

Casi and Mary brought up the changes to the membership policy and indicated that the updated membership form would soon be available on the NJBC website. They also invited everyone to make sure they were on the NJBC distribution list. They told the group that the required \$30 membership fee had been removed, and that we are now asking for a donation. Everyone who signs up as a member will now have voting rights.

Legal Affairs Committee report

Ellen spoke on the new breastfeeding law enacted on January 1 that requires insurers to pay for donor milk as long as certain conditions are met. Only straight Medicaid still doesn't cover donor milk. She promised to add more information about the new law to the NJBC website. She recommended that those who work in the hospital setting develop donor milk policies and train staff to dispense milk. Babies can receive donor milk post hospital discharge as long as their pediatrician provides evidence of medical necessity. Ellen emphasized the need to get the word out about this new law, and Roseanne chimed in on the policies and procedures they use at the Human Milk Bank of NY. Casi proposed the formation of a new subgroup on human milk sharing in the hospital setting, and promised to gather names of those interested at the end of the meeting. Vicki proposed another subgroup on the need for human milk policies outside of the hospital. The group will share templates of the "proof of need" document.

Administrative Reports

Corporation name: New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition, Inc

IRS Nonprofit Application status: Mary spoke about the application for 501C3 status, and explained the reasons for pursuing this application. She added that Kay will be the treasurer and will be present to do a longer financial report at the next meeting.

USBC Reports

Ellen told the group that the USBC conference has been moved from August to June. The NJBC is planning on sponsoring an attendee, as we did last year. Applications will be due soon.

Website and ZipMilk

Casi spoke about the importance of everyone having their updated contact information on the distribution list. She noted that the website is a work in progress that needs more frequent editing as well. She told the group to contact her if they wanted to add resources to the website, and if they want to change their ZipMilk listing. Casi also informed the groups that the Massachusetts Breastfeeding Coalition who runs ZipMilk can track monthly and yearly statistics of where users come from. We plan to exploit this resource as much as we can. She reminded people to take home ZipMilk and Breastfeeding Law cards.

Social Media

Judy updated the group by phone on social media usage. She mentioned several posts that went viral and asked everyone to “like” the Facebook group and page to boost our visibility. Lorraine volunteered to help the NJBC Instagram and Twitter feeds.

To close the meeting, Mary announced that we will let everyone know where and when our April meeting will be held, but we will be traveling to another location to be geographically fair to all attendees.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05.