

Studying the Barriers to Breastfeeding

Research led by Keene State College (KSC) Health Science faculty (**Drs. Becky Dunn, Karrie Kalich, and Meg Henning**) and supported by **Rudy Fedrizzi, MD** will identify and quantify the individual and environmental challenges and barriers to breastfeeding among low income mothers. The study involves a comprehensive survey of hundreds of mothers in the WIC program about the factors associated with initiation and continuation of breastfeeding. A clinically-integrated, community coalition of dozens of breastfeeding advocates from the southwestern/southern NH region will then use the information gathered to inform a Community Action Plan containing interventions and policy initiatives that will be used to promote breastfeeding in Cheshire, Hillsborough and Sullivan counties. This study aligns with CMC/DHK's efforts to become designated as "Baby Friendly." The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative is a global program sponsored by the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund to encourage and recognize birth settings that support breastfeeding hospitals and birthing centers that offer an optimal level of care for infant feeding. The study and coalition work is funded by a KSC faculty development grant and Cheshire County HEAL.

