



## Breastfeeding News

# Breastfeeding Friendly Community Clinic Modeled at Eisner

A long-term plan for establishing comprehensive breastfeeding support and ensuring continuum of care is paying off for patients and employees at **Eisner Pediatrics and Family Medical Center** in downtown Los Angeles. Much like the process of earning Baby Friendly hospital designation, community health centers are beginning to adopt comprehensive breastfeeding policies and practices.

Under the leadership of Magdalena Estrada, IBCLC, Eisner has been an early adopter, taking key steps over several years to become breastfeeding-friendly. Central to their success has been **clinic leadership support** of breastfeeding care as part of the clinic culture.

Breastfeeding education is provided methodically to staff, including physicians, midwives, nurse practitioners, perinatal health workers and medical assistants. In a busy clinic, **effective training** strategies include using small increments of time and partnering with local WIC training opportunities.

Recognizing that staff with a range of expertise is the most strategic approach to quality care, Medical Assistants trained as **certified lactation educators** help with patient education in the Pediatric department, and then triage more complex problems to the **IBCLC**. Comprehensive Perinatal Health Workers are also trained to support patients' breastfeeding efforts.

In fact, trained professionals serve mothers throughout their pregnancy and postpartum period, while pediatric support continues the care. Phone operators provide information on breastfeeding services, health



*Carl Coan, Eisner President and CEO (now retired), recognizes the lactation training of clinic staff.*

providers give prenatal breastfeeding support during CPSP assessments, clinic outreach staff visit mothers in the hospital, clinic staff support moms postpartum, and pediatric support is available for as long as needed.

Establishing and consistently using infant feeding data fields in **electronic medical records** provides evaluation data. As the chart shows, breastfeeding rates have improved!

Working with the billing staff, **lactation support is billed** through the Comprehensive Perinatal Health Services Program and at the clinic's rate as a Federally Qualified Health Plan to make these services sustainable – a critical component to ongoing breastfeeding support.

The **clinic environment** promotes breastfeeding, too, with breastfeeding posters and information available and no formula marketing. Human resources staff was instrumental in establishing **worksite lactation support** for employees with both a policy and a space to express milk or breastfeed.

And lastly, **community relationships** have been key to establishing the continuum of care. Eisner works closely with California Hospital Medical Center, neighborhood WIC clinics, and health plans to ensure referral systems are in place and services provided.

Taken together, these comprehensive efforts form the community breastfeeding safety net for Eisner patients and provide a model for other communities.

