

Lactation Education Across Rural Nebraska (L.E.A.R.N.) was developed to increase breastfeeding support to new moms as they start to breastfeed along with the continued support to increase the longevity of breastfeeding throughout Nebraska to the recommended age of at least 12 months. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Service's focus has been to increase the number of **Certified Lactation Counselors (CLCs)** in Nebraska, especially in the rural areas, that demonstrate the adoption of a selected subset of criteria in support of breastfeeding using the **Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding**. Nebraska's geography is primarily rural and it is a sparsely populated state with 34 out of 93 counties considered to be frontier (6 or fewer persons per square mile). Approximately 45.1% of the state's residents live in the metropolitan cities of Lincoln and Omaha, located in the eastern part of the state.



L.E.A.R.N.

NEBRASKA
Good Life. Great Mission.
DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Lactation Education Across Rural Nebraska

2015 CLC Class

Target Audience: Rural Nurses



In 2015, DHHS offered the L.E.A.R.N. scholarship opportunity for nurses in rural areas to attend a CLC training and certification exam. The CLC training was provided by The Center for Breastfeeding, Healthy Children's Project, Inc., and was hosted by Regional West Medical Center from August 17 through August 21, 2015. The focus

of the L.E.A.R.N. program was to increase the availability of qualified CLCs that demonstrate the adoption of a selected subset of criteria in support of breastfeeding. The L.E.A.R.N. program provided 40 new CLC throughout Nebraska CLC training.

Steps

Each scholarship awardee agreed to:

- Take the certification exam.
- Complete baseline and quarterly assessment surveys based on the **10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding** or **10 Steps to Support Parents Choice to Breastfeed Their Baby**.

The participant demographic make-up include:

- 52 initial applicants with 42 actually taking the class.
- 40 participants passed both the practical and written portions of the certification exam.
- 40 females ranging in age, culture/diversity, and occupation, three stated they were fluent in Spanish.
- Participants included 35 nurses, one physician, APRN, Certified Nursing Assistant, home health visitor, CLC, Student Nurse, and Peer Counselor.
- 26 participants worked in a hospital setting, six in a physician office / clinic setting; eight worked in a Health Department setting, and two in other settings.
- No data obtained on applications regarding race / ethnic background.

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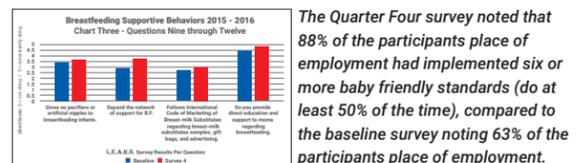
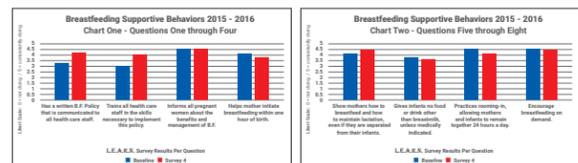
L.E.A.R.N. Participant / New C.L.C. Locations in Nebraska



This map of Nebraska shows the location of the participant by address, showing the many rural areas that increased the number of CLCs to assist with breastfeeding.

Quarterly Assessment Survey Results:

The following charts compare the baseline survey response to the fourth quarter survey responses on the twelve questions related to **Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding** for those nurses working in a hospital setting and **10 Steps to Support Parents Choice to Breastfeed Their Baby** for those working in an office setting. (7) (8)



The Quarter Four survey noted that 88% of the participants place of employment had implemented six or more baby friendly standards (do at least 50% of the time), compared to the baseline survey noting 63% of the participants place of employment.

Strengths:

- Rural Focus
- Increased support for breastfeeding moms across the state

Several strengths include the rural focus of the L.E.A.R.N. Program. Increasing the CLCs in the rural areas will help promote breastfeeding within the rural areas. Selecting the Host Site in a rural location increased the number of CLCs in western and central Nebraska. Regional West Medical Center is the biggest hospital in the western portion of the state.

Possible Barriers / Limitations:

- Limited recruitment
- Survey response attrition

The two barriers or limitations were determined with the L.E.A.R.N. Program were stronger recruitment and attrition. Stronger recruitment was needed to create a waiting list to assure all slots were filled due to last minute cancellations. Increasing recruitment to area health departments and hospitals in the western portion of the state may have increased the number of participants in that region.

Attrition in the participants' survey response also was a barrier. There was a decrease in numbers with each quarterly assessment, with a 57 percent decrease in responses by the fourth quarter survey. A method to require the participants to fill out the quarterly assessments may have been helpful.

	Number of Participants completing the survey
Baseline:	42
Survey 1	31
Survey 2	28
Survey 3	23
Survey 4	18

Overall Evaluation:

The last assessment survey, participants were asked two overall evaluation questions regarding the CLC training.

How the CLC training changed your practice?

- Increased knowledge and confidence.
- Aware of need to breastfeed as soon as possible.
- Offering breastfeeding support groups that were previously unavailable.
- Offering prenatal breastfeeding classes lead by CLC nurses.
- Being a resource for others.
- More aware of how to better help mothers achieve their breastfeeding goals.

How has your CLC training changed your workplace practice?

- We now have a class on breastfeeding offered with prenatal classes four times a year which their three CLC nurses present.
- More cohesive in our patient education.
- I have packets made to give to moms.

- I see moms in clinic at 28-30 weeks, 36 weeks, and again after birth and as needed.
- Educating the other staff and being consistent with our language and practices.

Summary:

The L.E.A.R.N. Program provided Nebraska with forty new CLCs to assist with breastfeeding initiation and longevity, in twenty-five different communities, and three in neighboring states. Overall the results were positive with growth noted in eight of the twelve questions related to **Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding** for those nurses working in a hospital setting and **10 Steps to Support Parents Choice to Breastfeed Their Baby** for those working in an office setting. L.E.A.R.N. Program participants increased the knowledge, awareness, and confidence to educate breastfeeding mothers and their families. With the increased support provided in rural areas across the state, the breastfeeding mothers will meet their own breastfeeding goals, along with increasing the breastfeeding and longevity of breastfeeding rates in Nebraska.

2017 CLC Class

Target Audience:

Target audience for the 2017 CLC training is Nebraska minority, non-Caucasian, nursing professionals currently working with pregnant women, postpartum women, and/or newborns in Nebraska birthing hospitals, offices, clinics, and health departments to assist with the establishment of breastfeeding, decrease the percentage of infants receiving formula in the hospital, and increase exclusive breastfeeding for at least 6 months.

Scholarship provided:

Five scholarship opportunities were provided for minority, non-Caucasian, nursing professionals to attend a Certified Lactation Counselor training. This scholarship covered transportation, hotel, and meal reimbursement along with the CLC training and certification exam. Contracts between DHHS and the employers were signed, as the employer funded the expenses up front and DHHS reimbursed the employers.

Attendee Requirements

Each scholarship awardee agreed to:

- Take the certification exam.
- Complete baseline and quarterly assessment surveys based on the **10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding** or **10 Steps to Support Parents Choice to Breastfeed Their Baby**.
- Submit expenses for reimbursement.

The participant demographics:

Four participants became certified. One participant was not able to attend at the last minute for work related reasons.

Racial / Ethnic status: African, American Indian Descendant, Hispanic/Latina

Different languages spoken included: English, Kiswahili, Kimeru, and Spanish

Rural area: Four participants lived in rural areas of Nebraska

Overall Results:

All attendees reported that they increased their knowledge and loved the class. **Ongoing data collection:** Baseline and two of the four quarter surveys are complete.

2018 CLC Class

Target Audience:

No specific targeted audience with this class. Information on participant's ethnic background, if they spoke another language, and if they worked with minority groups was collected on the application.

Scholarship provided:

DHHS joined with the Nebraska Breastfeeding Coalition and CHI Health to provide the 2018 CLC scholarship. CHI Health provided funding for the project and DHHS will be completing the data collection from the quarterly assessment surveys and final report. The scholarship provided funding for 75 participants to attend the CLC Class and to take the certification exam.

Steps

Each scholarship awardee agreed to:

- Take the certification exam.
- Complete baseline and quarterly assessment surveys based on the **10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding** or **10 Steps to Support Parents Choice to Breastfeed Their Baby**.
- Complete a breastfeeding awareness project in your community to help raise awareness and normalize breastfeeding.
- Share the project success on the last quarterly survey. The information on all the projects will be compiled and shared with all participants.

The addition of a short **10 to 15 minute breastfeeding awareness project** presentation promoting one or two of the steps based on the **10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding** or **10 Steps to Support Parents Choice to Breastfeed Their Baby**, was added to this scholarship to promote breastfeeding in the community.

The participant demographic make-up include:

- 129 applicants, class limit 75
- 40 nurses
- 53 percent rural
- 47 percent metro
- 10 participants speak a second language