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Topic: The first 1000 days, infant feeding, and early childhood development

Title: Changing the tide on infant mortality and morbidity through breastfeeding support, promotion and protection: A case study from KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Presentation Type: Oral

Objective

To present the experience of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Province in changing child health outcomes by focussing on infant feeding, specifically breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding.

Background

In the 1990's breastfeeding was not encouraged in the HIV infected population. HIV positive mothers received six months free infant formula as part of the National PMTCT programme during this period. This impacted safe infant feeding practices with an increase in child deaths from preventable disease such as diarrhoea and pneumonia.

KwaZulu-Natal Intervention

The increasing evidence prompted the KZN Provincial Government to reassess the Provincial Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) in context of HIV Policy and subsequently stopped the issuing of routine free infant formula to HIV-positive mothers effective 1 January 2011 (DoH 2010).

Progress

Since the policy change, KwaZulu-Natal Government with partners has implemented projects (KwaZulu-Natal Initiative for Breastfeeding Support (KIBS) and Mother-Baby Friendly Initiative (MBFI) plus Project). These projects aim to increase breastfeeding

rates in the province and improve child survival. Both projects focus on human milk bank strengthening in the Province.

The Made by Mom campaign is implemented as part of the projects to create awareness in the community about breastfeeding and human milk banking.

Results

Data from the KIBS 2015 qualitative study will be presented indicating exclusive breastfeeding rates at 14 weeks to be at 46%. District specific rates are also available.