Oregon WIC Breastfeeding Support & Education

Oregon’s breastfeeding rates are some of the highest in the nation and exceed all of the Healthy People 2020 breastfeeding benchmarks. The data indicates that lower-income women in Oregon initiate and sustain breastfeeding at a rate comparable to higher income women, whereas in most other states there is a wide gap between these two groups. Oregon WIC promotes breastfeeding as the norm for infant feeding. WIC has taken multiple policy steps to align daily clinic operations and implement evidence-based strategies to protect and support breastfeeding. Here are a few ways we support breastfeeding services in WIC:

- **Professional lactation services**
  Twenty local WIC staff are International-Board-Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC).

- **Prenatal breastfeeding education**
  Each month, WIC clinics provide numerous prenatal breastfeeding preparation classes statewide.

- **Peer support for breastfeeding**
  Breastfeeding peer counselors provide additional support in 7 local WIC agencies.

- **Education of health professionals** - The State WIC staff teach a free 3-day Breastfeeding Basics class twice a year. The class is open to staff from WIC, Head Start, Healthy Start, public health nursing programs and hospitals.

- **Enhanced food package** - Women who exclusively breastfeed their infants receive an enhanced WIC food package designed to meet their higher nutritional needs.

- **Breast pumps** - Local WIC agencies can provide manual, personal, double and hospital-grade breast pumps to WIC participants who do not qualify for a pump through their insurer.

Check out the Oregon Public Health Division breastfeeding webpage. It offers information on breastfeeding training opportunities, data, promotional materials, information on returning to work and much more.

2018 Oregon WIC data