BFHI Programme in Croatia: results and challenges

Josip Grguric, Anita Pavicic Bosnjak, Sanja Predavec
CROATIA

- 4.5 million inhabitants
- 42 000 births per year
- Rate of preterm birth: 6%
- Rate of C-section: 19.7%
- Low infant mortality rate (3.6/1000 live births)
- 31 maternity wards + 1 private maternity facility
- 5 level III NICUs + 1 level IV NICU; 6 level II neonatal care units (special care nursery)

Source: Croatian National Institute of Public Health 2012
BFHI programme in Croatia
1993 – 2014

• 30 out of 31 maternity hospitals have been designated as “Baby – Friendly”
Results of BFHI implementation in Croatian maternity wards

• Increase in the number of breastfed newborns at hospital discharge (from 75% to 95%)

• 20 years ago mothers and newborn infants were separated in all maternity wards in Croatia

• Today mothers and newborns are staying together in all maternity wards
The impact of the BFHI programme on a space and hygienic conditions in Croatian maternity hospitals during 2007 - 2013

- Built new maternity wards: 2 (Zabok, Split)
- Reconstructed maternity wards: 7 (Sisak, Karlovac, Požega, Šibenik, KB Merkur Zagreb, KBC Zagreb Petrova i KBC Sr. milosrdnice Zagreb)
Breastfeeding is supported and promoted

- During antenatal care (information/BF courses)
- After delivery (the maternity wards offer strong support for BF; most of them are designated as BFH)
- The first month (community health nurse)
- Infants (CHN, pediatrician, family physician, community breastfeeding support)
- One-year maternity leave
- Time off for BF when starting to work (have the right for two hours per day, fully paid for the first 12 months)
### Exclusive breastfeeding rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 2 mo</td>
<td>76.2 %</td>
<td>66.3 %</td>
<td>64.5 %</td>
<td>56.7 %</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 5 mo</td>
<td>54.2 %</td>
<td>45.9 %</td>
<td>44.7 %</td>
<td>41.4 %</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at 6 mo</td>
<td>14.8 %</td>
<td>15.9 %</td>
<td>16.6 %</td>
<td>18.2 %</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Croatian National Institute of Public Health
BFHI programme expansion

BIRTH: Maternity hospital as a crucial point for establishing successful breastfeeding.
Activities:
- All Croatian hospitals meet the requirements to become „Baby Friendly Hospitals“ in 2011
- 95% of children are breastfed at discharge from the maternity hospital!

PREGNANCY:
Women’s attitudes towards breastfeeding are formed during pregnancy, or even before.
Activities: new, standardised curriculum of the prenatal classes aimed at informing an increased number of parents about the importance of breastfeeding.

POST-NATAL PERIOD:
Support for mothers after being discharged from hospital positively impacts the duration of breastfeeding. Support provided by the family and community are crucial.
Activities:
- Implementation of labour legislation (mothers’ right to have a breastfeeding break)
- Regulation of the methods of advertising and selling breastmilk supplements
- Breastfeeding support groups (GPD; see the map)
- Counselling Centres for Children - Breastfeeding Friendly

Multi-country Workshop on Development of Accrediation Standards for Maternity Wards and Neonatal Departments
15 – 16 September 2014, Belgrade
Antenatal period

- only 20% of pregnant women attending antenatal classes
- only 60% of pregnant women are visited by community health nurses
Support in postpartum period – Breastfeeding support groups

- Community health nurses – 135 breastfeeding support groups are organized in Croatia

- Non-governmental organization RODA – breastfeeding support groups in the area Zagreb, Split and Osijek
- Non-governmental organization IZVOR, Zadar
Support in postpartum period - primary health care offices

Breastfeeding Friendly Primary Care Office Initiative: “Well Baby Clinic – Breastfeeding Friendly”

• launched in 2008
• have to fulfill “10 steps”
• since 2011, 8 pediatric primary offices and 1 family physician office have been designated
In September 2012 the Croatian parliament endorsed the National Health Care Strategy 2012-2020 in which a separate section is dedicated to the promotion of breastfeeding in Croatia and calls for the implementation of the National Program for the Protection and Promotion of Breastfeeding, including the BFHI, standardisation of antenatal courses and setting up of breastfeeding-friendly primary health care offices.
Challenges

1. Adopt the National Programme for the Protection and Promotion of Breastfeeding

2. Apply the International Code of marketing of breast-milk substitutes

3. Maternity wards:
   • Breastfeeding promotion in NICUs
   • Mother and baby friendly hospitals

4. Increase exclusive breastfeeding rates up to 6 months with appropriate complementary food

5. Breastfeeding promotion in the community - creating a new culture of breastfeeding

6. Develop a system of accreditation of maternity wards
Thank you!

Multi-country Workshop on Development of Accreditation Standards for Maternity Wards and Neonatal Departments
15 – 16 September 2014, Belgrade

GREETINGS FROM CROATIA!
Multi-country Workshop on
Development of Accreditation Standards for Maternity Wards and Neonatal Departments
15 – 16 September 2014, Belgrade
Multi-country Workshop on
Developement of Accrediation Standards for Maternity Wards and Neonatal Departments
15 – 16 September 2014, Belgrade
Multi-country Workshop on
Developement of Accrediation Standards for Maternity Wards and Neonatal Departments
15 – 16 September 2014, Belgrade
Multi-country Workshop on
Development of Accreditation Standards for Maternity Wards and Neonatal Departments
15 – 16 September 2014, Belgrade
Multi-country Workshop on
Development of Accreditation Standards for Maternity Wards and Neonatal Departments
15 – 16 September 2014, Belgrade