

June 23, 2016

The Honourable Sara Hoffman, Minister of Health
423 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB
Canada T5K 2B6
Health.minister@gov.ab.ca

Dear Minister Hoffman,

Reference: Human Milk in Postpartum Units

The Calgary Breastfeeding Matters Group is requesting Alberta Health Services consider using pasteurized donor human milk in postpartum units. Human milk provides crucial immunoglobulins, antibodies and nutrients that are beneficial to babies first feeds. These nutrients are not present in manufactured formula.

Alberta babies are fortunate to have access to breast milk through the NorthernStar Mothers Milk Bank, for use when their mothers' own supply is not available.

In special situations when supplementation is required, mothers in the postpartum units of Alberta Health Services should be given a choice of whether to offer their infant formula or breast milk. A small amount would be needed (100 mls day one, 200 mls day two and 400 mls day three). The cost to supply a baby with breast milk for the first 3 days is just \$54. Often times newborn babies require just one or two feeds the first day for medical conditions such as low blood sugars or if moms own breast milk production is delayed.

Just one feed of formula alters the intestinal microflora of the baby. A healthy microflora is responsible for a healthy immune system. While infant formula is subsidized by Mead-Johnson (through contracts that contravene the International Code of Marketing of Breast milk Substitutes), human milk is healthier for our babies, Healthier babies save health care dollars.

Please let us know if you would consider the use of donor human milk in post partum units in Alberta.

We look forward to your reply.
With Regards,



Jennifer House MSc RD
Co-Chair
Calgary Breastfeeding Matters Group
Foundation



Jennifer Peddlesden BcPharm
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Political Action Committee
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cc.Verna Yiu, President and CEO, Alberta Health Services ahs.corp@ahs.ca
Debbie Leitch, Executive Director Maternal Newborn Child & Youth SCN
Brenda Huband, AHS Senior Vice President - Calgary Zone

Dr. Doug Wilson, Head, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Director NorthernStar Mothers Milk Bank
Jannette Festival, Executive Director NorthernStar Mothers Milk Bank
Jodine Chase, Breastfeeding Action Committee of Edmonton