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DATE: August 17, 2009

REPORT TITLE: **WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK -  
SEPTEMBER 27 TO OCTOBER 3, 2009**

FROM: Janette Smith, Commissioner of Health Services  
David L. Mowat, MBChB, MPH, FRCPC, Medical Officer of Health

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### RECOMMENDATION

**That the week of September 27th to October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 be proclaimed World Breastfeeding Week in the Region of Peel.**

### REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- September 27 to October 3, 2009 is World Breastfeeding Week in Canada.
- World Breastfeeding Week is a global campaign to raise awareness and support for breastfeeding. This year's theme is "Breastfeeding: A Vital Emergency Response".
- Peel Public Health's breastfeeding programs are based on research.
- Staff are trained to promote early intervention, exclusive breastfeeding to six months and supplementation only when medically necessary.
- Peel Public Health provides support to mothers through a variety of programs and resources.

### DISCUSSION

#### 1. Background

September 27 to October 3, 2009 is designated as World Breastfeeding Week in Canada. Each year the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) launches World Breastfeeding Week to protect, promote and support breastfeeding worldwide. WABA works in close alliance with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

This year's theme is **Breastfeeding: A Vital Emergency Response**. This theme highlights the importance of how breastfeeding can mitigate the effects of emergencies on infants and young children by ensuring a continued food supply. Breast milk is a safe and secure source of food and fluid for infants, is instantly available and provides active protection against illness. This important fact emphasizes the need for promotion of successful initiation of breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding to six months of age.

#### Current Situation

In the 2004/2005 Peel Public Health report, "Breastfeeding Practices in the Region of Peel", it was identified that 94 per cent of women initiate breastfeeding but less than 15 per cent breastfeed exclusively to six months of age. Both the World Health Organization (WHO) and

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the Canadian Pediatric Society recommend exclusive breastfeeding to six months with added complementary foods and continued breastfeeding to two years and beyond. The recent designation of Peel Public Health as a Baby Friendly community health service emphasized that although the breastfeeding initiation rate is excellent, there is a need to address poor exclusive rates in our Region.

Evidence supports early intervention to promote breastfeeding by targeting prenatal audiences. Encouraging informed decision making and teaching skills to breastfeed during the prenatal period is a priority to positively impact exclusive rates. The website 'BreastfeedingInPeel.ca' provides current, credible information about breastfeeding that is well supported by research. Video tutorials that teach new mothers how to breastfeed are available on this website for parents to view prior to delivery, in the first days when they arrive home with their baby and anytime they feel they need assistance.

Early intervention and support is an important step in the transition of the infant from hospital to home. Peel Public Health provides a number of breastfeeding supports to mothers through our breastfeeding telephone support line, at our breastfeeding clinics and through Breastfeeding Companions, our volunteer mother to mother telephone support service. Mothers are encouraged to call the Breastfeeding Contact Centre at 905-799-7700 and make an appointment to visit their local Peel Public Health Breastfeeding Clinic in the first week home from hospital.

**CONCLUSION**

Breastfeeding is an essential part of child health promotion. By proclaiming World Breastfeeding Week in Peel, the community will continue to recognize that the Region's programs are part of the global strategy to positively impact child health.



Janette Smith  
Commissioner of Health Services



David L. Mowat, MBChB, MPH, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health

**Approved for Submission:**



*for* D. Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer

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**APPENDIX I**

# Proclamation

**World Breastfeeding Week  
September 27 to October 3, 2009**

**WHEREAS, the week of September 28 to October 3, 2009 is World Breastfeeding Week in Canada and breastfeeding is promoted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), The World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA), Health Canada, Infant Feeding Action Coalition (INFACT Canada), and the Canadian Pediatric Society;**

**AND WHEREAS, the theme of World Breastfeeding Week is "Breastfeeding: A Vital Emergency Response";**

**AND WHEREAS, the theme raises awareness about the World Health Organization's International Code of Marketing Breast-milk Substitutes which was endorsed by the 34th Assembly of the World Health Organization in response to the need to end declining breastfeeding rates internationally;**

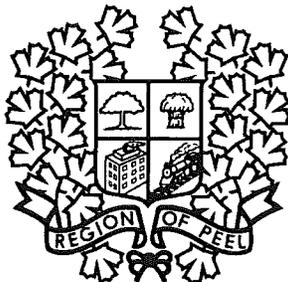
**AND WHEREAS, Peel Public Health supports women to breastfeed their children;**

**AND WHEREAS, women need community support and information about how to breastfeed exclusively to six months and to prolong breastfeeding into their child's first years with the introduction of appropriate foods;**

**AND WHEREAS, breastfeeding women need and benefit from community support and information to effectively prolong breastfeeding into their child's first years;**

**AND WHEREAS, breastfeeding is an essential component of child health promotion;**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the week of September 28 to October 3, 2009 be proclaimed WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK in the Regional Municipality of Peel.**



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**Emil Kolb  
Regional Chair**