

Title: Improving Breastmilk Feeding at Discharge: A Quality Improvement

IRB# 2010-035

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Synopsis:

The benefits of human milk for infants are well recognized. Human milk provides not only optimal nutrition for infants, but also key digestive enzymes, direct immunologic protective factors, immunomodulators, anti-inflammatory factors, anti-oxidants, growth factors, hormones and other bioactive factors, and multiple cellular elements, with new components and interactions being discovered regularly.

The objective of this research project is to determine the effectiveness of implementation of locally relevant literature-based best practices on the rates of breastmilk feeding in newborns with birthweight less than 1500 grams. This implementation will be supported by 10 other involved Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICUs), as well as an Expert Panel, participating in a statewide collaborative focused on improving breastmilk feeding in very low birth-weight infants.

This study is a cohort study with historical controls, evaluating the effect of implementation of one or more components of a collection of literature based best practices ("change package") on the primary outcome of "percent of eligible infants discharged home on any breastmilk". The baseline period is between October 1, 2008 and September 30, 2009 and the intervention period is between October 1, 2009 and September 30, 2010). A total of 11 NICUs, each independently implementing relevant best practices for their specific unit, are in the collaborative, supported by a cadre of internationally known experts in breastmilk feeding and quality improvement ("Expert Panel").