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Contact: Jenny Eriksen-Leary, Jenny.Eriksen@bmc.org, 617-638-6841

Boston Medical Center Receives W.K. Kellogg Grant to Support Implementation of Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative in Six States

BOSTON – The Breastfeeding Center at [Boston Medical Center](#) has received a \$409,998 three-year grant from the [W.K. Kellogg Foundation](#) for its American Indian and Alaska Native Communities and Hospitals Advancing Maternity Practices (AI/AN CHAMPS) project to promote Baby-Friendly designation and to improve maternity care practices through work with tribal and Alaska Native hospitals and the communities that surround them.

“This funding will help us to keep working with American Indian and Alaska Native communities to promote breastfeeding, and to help hospitals in those communities practice optimal care for mothers and new babies,” said Anne Merewood, PhD, MPH and Project Director at CHAMPS. “Breastfeeding protects against many health problems to which American Indians and Alaska Natives are particularly prone.”

The [Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative](#) (BFHI) was launched in 1991 by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to encourage and recognize hospitals and birthing centers that support breastfeeding and optimal mother/baby care by meeting the [Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding](#) and the [International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes](#). Baby-Friendly hospitals increase initiation and exclusive breastfeeding rates in the hospital and beyond. Exclusive breastfeeding has countless evidence-based health and emotional benefits for mothers and children. Benefits around reduced obesity, reduced diabetes, and enhanced psychological and familial health and bonding are particularly pertinent to American Indians and Alaska Native populations.

This work will build on The Breastfeeding Center’s previous Kellogg-funded projects in Native American communities. All 13 federally funded Indian Health Service (IHS) hospitals, and two tribally operated hospitals, have gained Baby-Friendly designation. AI/AN CHAMPS will support AI/AN tribes and hospitals in Alaska, Arizona, Montana, New Mexico, and Oklahoma in their goals for improving breastfeeding rates and achieving Baby-Friendly designation.

The Breastfeeding Center is also running Kellogg-funded CHAMPS projects in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Southern Texas. This model promotes community involvement to enhance the success of implementing the BFHI in hospitals serving disadvantaged communities. The main goal of AI/AN CHAMPS is to ensure that all five tribally operated birthing hospitals in the lower 48 states and four of the seven Alaska Native hospitals become Baby-Friendly designated.

About Boston Medical Center

Boston Medical Center is a private, not-for-profit, 496-bed, academic medical center that is the primary teaching affiliate of Boston University School of Medicine. It is the largest and busiest provider of trauma and emergency services in New England. Committed to providing high-quality health care to all, the hospital offers a full spectrum of pediatric and adult care services including primary and family medicine and advanced specialty care with an emphasis on community-based care. Boston Medical Center offers specialized care for complex health problems and is a leading research institution, receiving more than \$118 million in sponsored research funding in fiscal year 2014. It is the 11th largest recipient of funding in the U.S. from the National Institutes of Health among independent hospitals. In 1997, BMC founded Boston Medical Center Health Plan, Inc., now one of the top ranked Medicaid MCOs in the country, as a non-profit managed care organization. It does business in Massachusetts as BMC HealthNet Plan and as Well Sense Health Plan in New Hampshire, serving more than 315,000 people, collectively. Boston Medical Center and Boston University School of Medicine are partners in the Boston HealthNet – 14 community health centers focused on providing exceptional health care to residents of Boston. For more information, please visit <http://www.bmc.org>.

About the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by breakfast cereal pioneer, Will Keith Kellogg, is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work and life. The Kellogg Foundation is based in Battle Creek, Michigan, and works throughout the United States and internationally, as well as with sovereign tribes. Special emphasis is paid to priority places where there are high concentrations of poverty and where children face significant barriers to success. WKKF priority places in the U.S. are in Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico and New Orleans; and internationally, are in Mexico and Haiti. For more information, visit www.wkkf.org.