



CHAMPS, UMMC TO LAUNCH BREASTFEEDING IPE

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BOSTON MA. –Communities and Hospitals Advancing Maternity Practices (CHAMPS) will be launching a breastfeeding education module across all seven of the University of Mississippi Medical Center’s health professions schools thanks to a grant from the Bower Foundation.

The Inter-Professional Education (IPE) unit on breastfeeding will contain video segments featuring real-life scenarios such as a prenatal clinic appointment, an in-hospital breastfeeding assessment, and a postpartum breastfeeding support group. The first IPE unit to be implemented across all UMMC schools, it is scheduled to be a part of the academic curriculum by fall 2020.

The educational modules will be instrumental in sharing the benefits of breastfeeding across medical disciplines, said Dr. Ralph Didlake, chief academic affairs officer at UMMC.

“Interprofessional education has become a critically important tool in helping to prepare future clinical providers for a team-based approach to patient care,” Didlake said. “The fact that breastfeeding has been chosen as our first major IPE unit reflects the importance we place on this activity, which conveys so many lifelong health benefits to infants.”

The health professions schools at UMMC are medicine, nursing, pharmacy, dentistry, population health, health-related professions and graduate studies.

“This IPE will educate students from all disciplines about breastfeeding,” said Anne Merewood, PhD, MPH, associate professor at Boston University School of Medicine and director of CHAMPS. “Breastfeeding is very appropriate for an IPE, because it cuts across all clinical fields and needs teamwork to help women succeed.”

UMMC faculty from each discipline will act as content experts from their schools, while CHAMPS will be responsible for creating the scenarios and providing breastfeeding expertise. CHAMPS has worked in Mississippi since 2014, helping hospitals across the state gain the Baby-Friendly designation.

The goal is for the IPE to help sustain the current momentum around breastfeeding in Mississippi, where 25 percent of hospitals, including UMMC, have gained the World Health Organization’s Baby-Friendly title. More hospitals in the state are approaching the designation.

“This is fantastic,” said Alice Chaney Herndon, nurse manager of the Mother Baby Unit of Wiser Hospital for Women and Infants at UMMC and lactation program director. “The more health care professionals know about the benefits of breastfeeding, the more they can educate their patients in the future.”

The Bower Foundation has been a long-time supporter of population health initiatives at UMMC. A gift from the Foundation established the John B. Bower School of Population Health in 2016.



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About CHAMPS

Mississippi Communities and Hospitals Advancing Maternity Practices (CHAMPS) seeks to improve maternal and child health outcomes through the promotion of breastfeeding and Baby-Friendly practices across Mississippi. Mississippi CHAMPS is funded by grants from The Bower Foundation and the W. K. Kellogg Foundation and has been running since 2014. Currently the focus is on achieving and sustaining Baby-Friendly designation at all Mississippi birthing hospitals, and supporting community activity and advocacy to improve maternal child health practices, especially in underserved populations.

About The Bower Foundation

Given the vast health challenges facing Mississippians, The Bower Foundation directs its funds and energies into making sustainable, systemic improvements in the state's health and education infrastructures. Through strong partnerships, the foundation leverages limited resources into grants that support mutual goals of better health outcomes and policy. The living legacy of Dr. John D. Bower's work inspires The Bower Foundation to be proactive and highly selective in providing grants for the creation, expansion and support of quality health initiatives.

About the University of Mississippi Medical Center

A campus of the University of Mississippi, UMMC is the state's only academic medical center. Located in Jackson, it encompasses seven health science schools, including medicine, nursing, health related professions, dentistry, pharmacy, graduate studies and population health. The Medical Center's health care enterprise includes the state's only Level I trauma center and its only children's hospital. UMMC's education, research and health care missions share the objectives of improving the health of the state's population and eliminating health disparities. For more information, visit <http://www.umc.edu> and <https://www.umc.edu/PublicAffairs/Office-of-Public-Affairs.html>.

