

Trauma-Informed Lactation Support Policy

POLICY STATEMENT:

_____ acknowledges the significance of trauma-informed lactation support in promoting the well-being of individuals and families. This policy aims to guide the team's approach to providing collaborative, qualitative, and considerate trauma-informed lactation support resources.

APPLICATION:

The intent of this policy is to have expectations documented in writing that can be used to hold the Community Action Team accountable, since it's a traceable document that can be used for reference.

This document may be utilized and adapted by stakeholders that would like to adopt a trauma-informed standard of care as it pertains to lactation support.

BACKGROUND AND CORE VALUES:

Trauma-informed lactation support refers to a framework or approach that recognizes and addresses the potential impact of trauma on lactation and breastfeeding experiences. A trauma-informed approach is the "how" in delivery of perinatal support, ensuring that pregnant and lactating people are seen and interacted with in context of their life experiences. It involves understanding that individuals who have experienced trauma may have unique needs and sensitivities that require a compassionate and supportive approach.

As a Healthy Community Action Team dedicated to supporting a trauma-informed lactation approach, we honor the following core values:

Safety - Ensuring that the lactating individual feels physically and emotionally safe during the support process. This involves creating a calm and comfortable environment, using clear and respectful communication, and allowing the individual to have control over their choices and decisions.

Trustworthiness - Building trust with the lactating individual by being reliable, honest, and transparent. This includes respecting their boundaries, maintaining confidentiality, and consistently following through on commitments.

Empowerment - Recognizing the individual's strengths and resilience and supporting their autonomy and empowerment in making decisions about their breastfeeding journey. This involves providing information, education, and resources to help them make informed choices that align with their goals and values.

Collaboration - Working collaboratively with the lactating individual, their support system, and other healthcare providers to ensure a coordinated and holistic approach to lactation support. This may involve establishing open lines of communication, fostering partnerships, and referring to appropriate professionals when needed.

Sensitivity - to trauma triggers: Being aware of and sensitive to potential trauma triggers that may arise during lactation support. This includes being mindful of language and body language, respecting personal boundaries, and adapting support strategies to avoid re-traumatization.

Cultural humility - Recognizing and respecting the diversity of individuals' backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences. A trauma-informed lactation approach acknowledges the importance of cultural humility in providing inclusive and culturally sensitive support.

A trauma-informed lactation support/approach prioritizes the emotional well-being and individual needs of the lactating individual, while aiming to create a safe and empowering environment for them to navigate and own their breastfeeding journey.

POLICY GUIDELINES:

1. Trauma-Informed Approach:

- a.** All team members will receive training on trauma-informed care principles, including understanding the impact of trauma on lactation and breastfeeding experiences.
- b.** The team will support safe and supportive environments that respect the autonomy and choices of individuals seeking lactation support.
- c.** Trauma-informed language and practices will be used to ensure sensitivity and empathy towards individuals who have experienced trauma.

2. Collaboration:

- a.** The Healthy Community Action Team will foster partnerships and collaborations with lactation consultants, healthcare providers, mental health professionals, and community organizations to enhance the quality and accessibility of trauma-informed lactation support services.

b. Collaboration will be encouraged through regular communication, sharing of resources, and joint training opportunities.

3. Qualitative Support:

a. The team will prioritize providing individualized, person-centered support to individuals providing and seeking lactation assistance, taking into consideration their unique needs, preferences, and circumstances.

b. Lactation support guidance and resources will be offered in a compassionate and non-judgmental manner, recognizing the emotional and physical experiences that trauma survivors may face.

4. Considerate Approach:

a. Sensitivity will be exercised during conversations and interactions, with a focus on actively listening, validating experiences, and providing emotional support as needed.

5. Confidentiality and Privacy:

a. The team will avoid unnecessary or intrusive questions and provide options for individuals to share information at their own pace. Use trauma-informed assessment tools and techniques that are sensitive to potential triggers and traumatic experiences.

b. The team will ensure that data is securely stored, and only shared with authorized individuals on a need-to-know basis. Communicate confidentiality policies clearly and obtain informed consent for any data sharing. Offer individuals options for anonymous reporting or pseudonyms if they feel more comfortable.

6. Continuous Improvement:

a. The Healthy Community Action Team will regularly assess and evaluate its trauma-informed lactation support measures to identify areas for improvement and ensure ongoing quality enhancement.

b. Feedback from stakeholders will be actively sought and considered in order to enhance the effectiveness and responsiveness of the resources provided.

POLICY COMPLIANCE AND REVIEW:

The Healthy Community Action Team will ensure compliance with this policy and conduct periodic reviews to assess its implementation, identify any gaps, and make necessary revisions to further promote a collaborative, qualitative, and considerate approach to trauma-informed lactation support.

POLICY EFFECTIVE DATE:

This policy will be effective immediately upon approval and communicated to all team members and relevant stakeholders.

POLICY REVIEW DATE:

This policy will be reviewed annually or as deemed necessary by the Healthy Community Action Team to maintain its relevance and effectiveness.

APPROVED BY:

[Name/Designation]

[Date]