

This thesis is focused on education of nursing mothers by a nurse - a lactation consultant. In the introduction of this thesis I am engaging in history of lactation counseling and activities related to support and protection of breastfeeding. I am also mentioning basic procedures in consultancy. Further, the education of a nursing mother in common as well as special or problematic situations are in detail described in the theoretical part.

In the empirical part of the thesis I successively defined seven hypotheses related to the lactation consultancy. For their confirmation I designed and completed an extensive research among health care professionals. Three different non-standardised questionnaires were used as the main method for the processing of the empirical part of the diploma thesis. The research was done among lactation consultants across a whole country, among health care professionals at the Gynecology and Obstetrics department of General Teaching Hospital in Prague and District hospital in Havlíčkův Brod. The research took place from 1.12.2005 to 20.2.2006 including a pilot study and the sample was made from 323 respondents. Having processed results I confirmed 5 of these hypotheses and two of them were refuted.

Five hypotheses were confirmed to be true by the research:

Hypothesis no 1 - a lactation consultant - female health care workers - are usually women with higher than secondary school education. In my selected set more than 70 % of the lactation consultants achieved higher than secondary school education.

Hypothesis no 2 - lactation consultants are more educated in breastfeeding domain than other health care workers. All lactation consultants own literature devoted to breastfeeding, almost 80 % of them have been using Internet pages with breastfeeding themes. Almost 100 % of lactation consultants attended seminars and over 50 % of lactation consultants also lecture or publish about breastfeeding.

Hypothesis no 4 - health care team members at neonatological department do not consider lacteal education as the most important activity of lactation consultants. More than 95 % of health care workers that attended my research wish that lactation consultants practically solve problems of mothers with breastfeeding. Health care workers usually know about educational activities of lactation consultants. Almost % of respondents agree with lactation consultants on educating the whole healthcare team not just nurses in breastfeeding.

Hypothesis no 6 - I expect that health care team members which are not specially educated in breastfeeding do not have sufficient knowledge to effectively help a breastfeeding mother with her problems. I wanted to compare breastfeeding to professional knowledge of nurses, doctors and specially educated lactation consultants and advocate the work of nurse - lactation consultants. Based on questionnaire answers it is obvious that health care professionals who are not especially educated in breastfeeding do not have enough necessary knowledge to be able to solve breastfeeding mother's problems with their advises. In comparison with other health care workers lactation consultants demonstrate a very good knowledge related to breastfeeding.

Hypothesis no 7 - a hospitalised breastfeeding mother always appreciates the help of a lactation-consultant during breastfeeding, no matter whether she has troubles with breastfeeding or not. In my research set it provided help in breastfeeding to more than 95 % of mothers. All mothers regarded this help as useful. More than 40 % of mothers state that a lactation-consultant helped the most.

Two hypotheses were disproved by the research - hypothesis no 3 and 5:

In a lactation consultant's work an educational activity predominates and it is also considered as the most important activity. I found that a predominate activity of lactationconsultants is a practical help to a breastfeeding mother. Moreover advisors consider it as the most important activity. A lactation consultant activity is not fully appreciated by the

health care team. Only less than 1 % of respondents felt that lacteal guidance is not necessary. Regarding the optimal number of educated lactation consultants' imagination, different opinions occur. Over 35 % of health care professionals assume that it would be ideal if every children's nurse and midwife nurse was educated as a lactation-consultant as well. Only 7 lactation-consultant respondents stated that they felt that health care professionals do not respect their work.