



CIMS Coalition for Improving Maternity Services

P.O. Box 2346 ■ Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida 32004 ■ 888-282-CIMS ■ FAX 904-285-2120 ■ www.motherfriendly.org

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Rae Davies, Executive Director

Phone: 1-(888) 282-CIMS

E-mail: cimshome@bellsouth.net

Fax: 904-285-2120

CIMS PARTICIPATES IN FIRST JOINT MOTHER-BABY FRIENDLY CONFERENCE

Ponte Vedra Beach, FL- In its continuing effort to collaborate with like-minded evidence-based and women-centered maternity care organizations, representatives from the Coalition for Improving Maternity Services (CIMS) presented three sessions on the Ten Steps to Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative at the Skills and Strategies in Breastfeeding/Childbearing and Breastfeeding Women-Improving Outcomes through Optimizing Practice two-day conference which took place November 5th and 6th in Natick, Massachusetts.

The groundbreaking conference sponsored by The Center for Breastfeeding Healthy Children was the first to combine the evidence-based principles of both the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative and the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative (MFCI) to improve maternal and infant outcomes. The Ten Steps of the MFCI encourages healthcare providers to promote and support successful breastfeeding practices as outlined jointly by the World Health Organization and UNICEF "Ten Steps of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative." The World Health Organization, recognizing the principles of the MFCI as key components to establishing successful breastfeeding included the concept of evidence-based childbirth as key in its newly launched WHO-UNICEF Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding implementation strategy.

CIMS representatives, Rae Davies, CIMS' Executive Director, Roberta Scaer, a co-founder of CIMS and Deborah Woolley, current CIMS Chair presented on the common barriers and solutions for implementing the Ten Steps to Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative. The CIMS presentations increased awareness and understanding among lactation professionals that optimizing evidence-based childbirth practices for the mother naturally optimizes the conditions and opportunities for successfully establishing breastfeeding.

Historically in the United States, the UNICEF Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative to promote breastfeeding was of interest largely to healthcare professionals whose focus is optimizing newborn and infant health outcomes. Similarly, the CIMS Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative

attracted maternity care professionals. However, both nationally and internationally influential non-profit organizations now realize that a cooperative approach which includes the best of both childbearing and infant practices can make a greater impact in changing the status quo in maternity care and improving outcomes for mothers and babies.

“We have established a positive common-goal relationship,” stated Deb Woolley, CIMS Chair “and look forward to more collaborative and productive projects in the future.”

For more information on the MFCI and “Breastfeeding is Priceless” a CIMS fact sheet, visit www.motherfriendly.org or contact the CIMS office at 1-888-282-CIMS. For more information on the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative visit www.babyfriendlyusa.org. To learn more about the Center for Breastfeeding visit www.healthychildren.org.

The Coalition for Improving Maternity Services (CIMS), a United Nations recognized NGO, is a collaborative effort of numerous individuals, leading researchers, and more than 50 organizations representing over 90,000 members. Promoting a wellness model of maternity care that will improve birth outcomes and substantially reduce costs; CIMS developed the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative in 1996. A consensus document that has been recognized as an important model for improving the healthcare and well being of children beginning at birth, the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative has been translated into several languages and is gaining support around the world.

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