

## **Update on South Carolina's Breastfeeding Support in the Workplace Program**

*The South Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition, with support from the South Carolina Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity, and the South Carolina Eat Smart, Move More Coalition, provided mini-grants to two hospitals and one university in 2009 to develop lactation support programs. Each of the three workplaces funded now has a private area for employees to breastfeed or pump, and each has a written policy supporting breastfeeding employees.*

More businesses in South Carolina are inquiring about how they can establish lactation support programs in their workplaces. The Breastfeeding Coalition and the Division are conducting outreach to South Carolina businesses, and as a result more workplaces are establishing breastfeeding programs. The Breastfeeding Coalition created a mother-friendly recognition program to highlight workplaces that support breastfeeding. Mother-Friendly Employers adopt a lactation support policy and provide their employees time and a private place to breastfeed or pump, education about the program and information about breastfeeding resources in the community. Employers complete an online form to apply for the mother-friendly recognition. Take a look at the photos below of the Piedmont Medical Center's breastfeeding room.

In 2010, eleven workplaces received grant funding and successfully implemented requirements to become Mother-Friendly Employers. Close to 20 businesses have now been formally recognized as Mother-Friendly Employers in South Carolina. The Coalition has secured additional funds for communities and businesses to become more involved in breastfeeding in the workplace efforts.

The Coalition is working with a large school district to get this employer involved in the Mother-Friendly Employer program. The Coalition plans to work with the district to set up a lactation program at the district office and in all 80 district schools. This district will be an excellent model for other districts and schools around the state to provide breastfeeding support for their employees.

The Coalition plans to develop a more comprehensive database to monitor businesses that support breastfeeding in the workplace. The group also plans to develop additional measures to monitor the success of the state's workplace breastfeeding support program and to understand the impacts of these efforts.

*Teresa Hill, MS, RD, LD, is the Nutrition Coordinator with the Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity at the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. She is also the South Carolina Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Coordinator. Teresa serves on the Breastfeeding Coalition Steering Committee as a liaison for the Division and the South Carolina Eat Smart, Move More Coalition. Teresa provides guidance to the Coalition as well as technical assistance and support to the Coalition's breastfeeding experts. She brings her expertise on policy, systems, and environmental change strategies related to breastfeeding. Increasing breastfeeding rates is one of the six goals in the South Carolina Obesity State Plan. To help meet this goal, breastfeeding in the workplace has become one of the priority areas for the Breastfeeding Coalition. You can reach Teresa at 803-545-4477 or at [hillte@dhec.sc.gov](mailto:hillte@dhec.sc.gov).*

## Piedmont Medical Center

