



#### 'PRMC Breastfeeding Swag Bag'

In 2013, the Pratt Area Breastfeeding Coalition was able to partner with a local 501c3 (Pratt Health Foundation) to secure a local grant from South Central Community Foundation to be used as a multi-county project in order to develop 'Breastfeeding Swag Bags'. In May 2014, these breastfeeding discharge bags were delivered to Pratt Regional Medical Center's Family Birth Suites and have since been available as THE discharge gift for all breastfeeding moms. The grant application was again submitted August 2014 to continue this project.

A stylish bag, magnet highlighting the local breastfeeding group meeting information, and printed brochures were purchased with the funding. PABC developed 'A Healthy Community starts with Breastfeeding' brochure which features breastfeeding support contact information for 9 counties as well as evidenced based information that promotes breastfeeding. The brochure also includes a survey to be completed by new moms to provide feedback on mother's goal and success as well as the effectiveness of the Swag Bag hospital discharge project. Pratt Area Breastfeeding Coalition members were able to approach national as well as local vendors to supply the bags with breastfeeding related product samples, coupons, information cards/publications and small gifts. Some coupons were for local photography sessions and restaurant discounts. A few locally homemade nursing covers were included and the coalition has developed a side project of developing 'sew-ready' kits that will contain all pre-cut fabric and supplies to develop additional nursing covers. With all supplies donated from the community, these kits will be available to community groups looking for service projects/hours, local quilt guilds and individual volunteers that would like to assist the coalition in our work. By creating this wonderful community volunteer opportunity we are also creating exposure about breastfeeding to community members of all ages from children to grandparents. Ultimately this is what will create the best surge of breastfeeding support and acceptance and our societal niche will begin to see that breastfeeding is the norm for infant feeding instead of viewing it as an infant feeding choice.

This bag promotes the importance of breastfeeding and the healthy start it provides for babies. Most importantly highlighted is the 24-hour assistance line for breastfeeding support provided by our local International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) and the Nursing Mamas Group. Currently meeting twice a month, this mother-to-mother group brings together expecting, new, and experienced mothers to share their knowledge; gives an outreach for breastfeeding questions/concerns, and provides prenatal, postnatal, and new baby education.

This project was created to expose breastfeeding education and support that has been put into place in the Pratt Area. It is the goal of the Pratt Area Breastfeeding Coalition to increase the breastfeeding rate among new mothers who deliver at PRMC and to improve exclusivity and duration rates. By providing new breastfeeding mothers with a specialized 'Swag Bag' we encourage mothers to continue to breastfeed resulting in better health and stronger immune systems for more children and lower health risks for mothers. Mothers in the area need to know the availability of breastfeeding support so that they are encouraged to meet their personal breastfeeding goals and are able to find help when needed. The PRMC Breastfeeding Swag Bag accomplishes this by getting contact information to new breastfeeding moms and getting mom & baby some cute breastfeeding related gear as they establish breastfeeding. A trusted community of breastfeeding support, information, and other mothers' experiences can support the mother along her breastfeeding journey for as long as she wishes. One of the long term goals of this project is to provide mothers with a hospital supported gift that is produced locally to support mothers in our community rather than allowing formula marketers to promote a profitable product and undermine the health of our nation's infants and mothers.

Rather than purchase ready-made bags, the coalition decided to make an impact on the local economy. This also enables us to spread information and resources about local breastfeeding support. We hope to continue this project in years to come to help support new breastfeeding families and educate the community.

The Pratt Area Breastfeeding Coalition was formed in June 2013 by 3 core breastfeeding advocates and is a growing entity with continued interest from healthcare professionals and mothers in the community. It serves the Pratt community as well as the surrounding counties of Barber, Kiowa, Stafford, Comanche, Kingman and Rice. The Pratt Area Breastfeeding Coalition's mission is to "Protect, Support, and Promote Breastfeeding in our Community" and seeks to create a foundation of health for mothers and babies in this area. For more information contact Julie Fields, 620.770.6844, [juliefielddslc@gmail.com](mailto:juliefielddslc@gmail.com).