

A WIC Designated Breastfeeding Expert (DBE) has advanced lactation knowledge and experience in human lactation and assists WIC participants with complex breastfeeding problems within the DBE scope of practice.

**1. Maintain lactation professional standards in all aspects of the DBE role.**

- A. Rely on evidence-based approaches for advanced level breastfeeding support.
- B. Respect the privacy, dignity and confidentiality of all WIC participants.
- C. Work collaboratively with WIC staff to implement a care plan for mothers experiencing complex breastfeeding challenges.
- D. Work within the policies and procedures of the WIC program and within the context of WIC's role for breastfeeding support.
- E. Maintain accurate records according to State and local agency policy and procedures.
- F. Refer mom for situations outside the DBE scope of practice or WIC's role for breastfeeding support.
- G. Acquire ongoing continuing education to stay current with lactation knowledge and skills, including opportunities to shadow an IBCLC.
- H. Maintain lactation credentials and certifications, if applicable.

**2. Assist WIC mothers and infants with complex breastfeeding problems.**

- A. Respond to yielding and other referrals for complex breastfeeding problems of WIC mothers from pregnancy through weaning.
- B. Develop and follow up on an individualized care plan for WIC mothers experiencing complex breastfeeding problems in concert with other WIC staff. The DBE:
  - 1. Conducts a breastfeeding assessment (including, understanding moms breastfeeding goals collecting a detailed breastfeeding history, breast assessment, infant assessment and feeding assessment) to identify potential breastfeeding challenge(s).
  - 2. Uses active listening counseling skills to conduct the assessment and build rapport.
  - 3. Develops care plan to include tips/solutions to resolve complex breastfeeding problems within the DBE scope.
  - 4. Collects and documents all relevant information.
  - 5. Communicates the plan with WIC team for implementation.
  - 6. Makes appropriate referrals for further assessment and follow-up, as needed.

- C. Help mothers meet their breastfeeding goals when facing complex maternal and infant breastfeeding challenges.
- D. Work with WIC Competent Professional Authorities (CPAs) to recommend or tailor appropriate WIC food packages to minimize the use of infant formula.
- E. Assess and issue breastfeeding aids as appropriate to address the complex problem and provide instruction on use, according to State policies and procedures.
- F. Refer mom to her health care provider when mom or baby need further assessment and medical care.
- G. Maintains a list of knowledgeable health care professionals in the area should the mother or baby need to seek these services.

**3. May serve as a WIC and community breastfeeding resource.**

- A. May serve as a breastfeeding resource for the WIC agency including mentoring peer counselors or providing training to other staff and community partners.
- B. Promote consistent messaging about breastfeeding using evidence-based resources.

**4. It is beyond the DBE scope of practice to:**

- A. Diagnose maternal or infant medical breastfeeding conditions (e.g., maternal infection, thrush, hormonal conditions, infant tongue restriction, or medical problems).
- B. Recommend medications, herbal treatments, or medical treatment plans to the mother.
- C. Act beyond the Level 4 WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum for the DBE, unless doing so is within their professional credentialing scope of practice and is permitted by State agency policy.