Breastfeeding Culture:
N.O.R.T.H., Inc. Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

GENERAL FACTS
Size: 140 employees
Women of childbearing age: 93%
Industry: Social Services, Non-Profit
Location: Philadelphia, PA
Contact Person: Judith M. Khanuja, WIC Nutrition Education and Breastfeeding Coordinator; jmkhanuja@northwic.org

LACTATION PROGRAM
Time: Employees may express milk during normal lunch and break periods. If additional time is needed, employee may use vacation time or work early or late.
Space: Most of the 18 sites and administrative offices have designated multi-use lactation spaces. Back-up spaces exist at all locations.
Flexibility: Employees work with supervisors to create a plan and use flexible scheduling. WIC provides FMLA and staff may purchase short-term disability coverage. Staff may use a paid leave program if they have not accrued leave time.
Support: All employees have access to a certified lactation counselor (CLC).
Equipment: WIC employees receive breast pumps at a reduced rate ($50 copay) or free, if they qualify as WIC participants. Employees can store expressed milk in a staff refrigerator.
Education: Employees are informed of the breastfeeding policy and have access to WIC’s library of breastfeeding books, pamphlets and videos. Because WIC educates clients about breastfeeding, the educational resources are strong.

"Pumping at work helps me stay more connected to my baby... knowing that I am giving her that nourishment makes me happy."
Anna Fayvishanko
WIC Nutrition Professional

The situation:
Informal support of breastfeeding, but no policy.
The solution:
Complete a self-appraisal and create a breastfeeding policy that strengthens the breastfeeding culture.

The mission of N.O.R.T.H., Inc., is to initiate and sponsor programs to improve the health and welfare of all low-income families in Philadelphia. As a community agency, WIC is at the front line of promoting and supporting breastfeeding. The decision to implement a formal workplace lactation program was an easy one.

"In America, the problem is we don’t see breastfeeding as part of our culture... WIC is a program to support and promote breastfeeding."
Linda Kilby, PhD, PD, LDN
Executive Director

N.O.R.T.H. WIC has 18 primary offices in varied settings throughout Philadelphia. There were some inconsistencies in these offices in terms of lactation space, and setting a policy helped to provide more consistent coverage. N.O.R.T.H. WIC has supported their breastfeeding employees with private space to pump and flexible scheduling.

The lactation policy firms up support for flexible scheduling and breast milk storage. All employees have access to this policy and pregnant or breastfeeding employees personally receive this information. Creating a policy has strengthened N.O.R.T.H. WIC’s breastfeeding friendly culture and made it more official.