The TEN STEPS to Successful Breastfeeding*

1. **Hospital policies**
   - Hospitals support mothers to breastfeed by:
     - Not promoting infant formula, bottles or texts
     - Making breastfeeding care standard practice
     - Keeping track of support for breastfeeding

2. **Staff competency**
   - Hospitals support mothers to breastfeed by:
     - Training staff on supporting mothers to breastfeed
     - Assessing health workers' knowledge and skills

3. **Antenatal care**
   - Hospitals support mothers to breastfeed by:
     - Discussing the importance of breastfeeding for babies and mothers
     - Preparing women in how to feed their baby

4. **Care right after birth**
   - Hospitals support mothers to breastfeed by:
     - Encouraging skin-to-skin contact between mother and baby soon after birth
     - Helping mothers to put their baby to the breast right away

5. **Support mothers with breastfeeding**
   - Hospitals support mothers to breastfeed by:
     - Checking, positioning, attachment and sucking
     - Giving practical breastfeeding support
     - Helping mothers with common breastfeeding problems

6. **Supplementing**
   - Hospitals support mothers to breastfeed by:
     - Giving only breast milk unless there are medical reasons
     - Prioritizing donor human milk when a supplement is needed
     - Helping mothers who want to formula feed to do so safely

7. **Rooming-in**
   - Hospitals support mothers to breastfeed by:
     - Letting mothers and babies stay together day and night
     - Making sure that mothers of sick babies can stay near their baby

8. **Responsive feeding**
   - Hospitals support mothers to breastfeed by:
     - Helping mothers know when their baby is hungry
     - Not limiting breastfeeding times
     - Encouraging mothers to hold their baby close when feeding (breast or bottle) and bond

9. **Bottles, teats and pacifiers**
   - Hospitals support mothers to breastfeed by:
     - Counsel mothers on the use and risks of feeding bottles, teats, and pacifiers

10. **Discharge**
    - Hospitals support mothers to breastfeed by:
      - Referring mothers to community resources for breastfeeding support
      - Working with communities to improve breastfeeding support services

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Well trained health workers provide the best support for breastfeeding.

Most women are able to breastfeed with the right support.

Immediate, unhurried and uninterrupted skin to skin contact after birth helps breastfeeding get started.

Breastfeeding is natural, but many mothers need help at first.

Giving formula to a breast fed baby without an indication makes it harder to get breastfeeding established.

Mothers need to be near their babies to recognise and respond to feeding cues.

Feeding babies (breast/bottle) whenever they are ready helps everybody.

It is important that everything that goes in the baby’s mouth needs to be clean.

Learning to breastfeed takes time. More information on breastfeeding support is available on www.mychild.ie

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*incorporated into the HSE Infant Feeding Policy for Maternity and Neonatal Services (2018)