

**Queensland
Government**

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29 JAN 2007

16 JAN 2007

Department of the
Premier and CabinetThe Honourable Alex Somlyay MP
Chairman
Standing Committee on Health and Ageing
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600**Submission No.12**

AUTHORISED: 14/2/07

AMZ

Dear Alex

Thank you for your letter to the Premier dated 7 December 2006 seeking a Queensland Government submission to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Inquiry into the health benefits of breastfeeding.

At the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Senior Official's meeting (SOM) meeting on 15 December 2006, COAG SOM agreed for Senior Officials to continue work in a number of areas in early childhood that relate to breastfeeding including antenatal care and children aged nought to three years of age. A Senior Officials Early Childhood and Childcare working group has been established for this purpose. Queensland remains committed to the COAG process which has proved a most effective venue for achieving positive outcomes for Queensland.

Outlined below is some general information on Queensland Government policies and strategies relevant to breastfeeding that may be of assistance to the committee in its deliberations.

The evidence supporting exclusive breast feeding, complemented by the appropriate introduction of solids at six months, is compiled in a publication produced by the Queensland Government titled *Optimal Infant Nutrition: Evidence-Based Guidelines 2003 - 2008*. The *Guidelines* publication available online at [http://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/childhealth/Optimal Infant Nutrition.pdf](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/childhealth/Optimal%20Infant%20Nutrition.pdf) is designed to assist Queensland Health staff by identifying priority population groups, key action areas and measurable outcome areas for optimal infant nutrition and contributes to the implementation of the *Strategic Policy Framework for Children's and Young People's Health 2002-2007*.

Queensland Government Health staff and the Australian Breastfeeding Association working in the community both play an important role in assisting mothers to continue breastfeeding and thereby increase the median duration of breastfeeding.

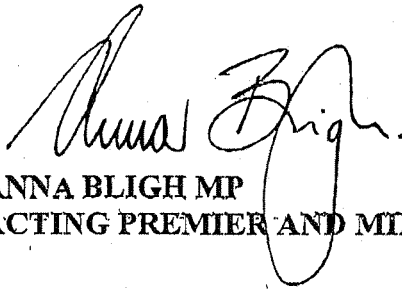
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There are a variety of factors that influence the provision of optimal infant nutrition. Addressing many of these factors rests outside the ambit of the health sector. The *Guidelines* therefore encourage collaborative partnerships between Queensland Health, other government and non-government organisations and the private sector to address these factors and to support and promote optimal infant nutrition.

Queensland Health also provides information to parents in the form of a booklet *Child Health Information – Your Guide to the First 12 Months*, which is given to every parent with their child's Personal Health Record. The booklet covers an introduction to breastfeeding, common breastfeeding concerns and introduction of solids from six months. This information is provided in factsheet format and translated into five languages available online at <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/child&youth/factsheets/>.

Thank you for your invitation.

Yours sincerely



**ANNA BLIGH MP
ACTING PREMIER AND MINISTER FOR TRADE**