Challenges & Support Needed for Breastfeeding during ANTENATAL CARE

To PREPARE for breastfeeding

Parents need education & anticipatory breastfeeding counselling starting during the first trimester as part of routine antenatal care.

Parents need preparation for breastfeeding, & this is crucial during pregnancy. However, they may not fully understand the need to breastfeed their newborns or the need to prepare.

Parents need to know:

- Breastfeeding myths & false beliefs
- Position & attach baby to the breast & hand express breastmilk
- How to continue breastfeeding when they return to work

Importance of breastfeeding
Recommendations for breastfeeding
Plan for the birth

Challenges in delivering the information:

- Competing priorities for their education. Parents are often focused on the actual birth rather than what will happen after birth such as breastfeeding.
- Antenatal staff are often insufficiently trained for the task.
- Lack of staff and healthcare provider commitment

How to improve support antenatally:

- Train all antenatal staff to provide up-to-date evidence-based information & counselling
- Introduce parents antenatally to the community networks

- Raise awareness of the importance of breastfeeding preparation
- Integrate breastfeeding with each antenatal visit, use available technology & practical demonstrations using aids

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