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Breastfeeding promotion in Kenya: changes in health worker knowledge, attitudes and practices, 1982-89.

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In 1982, a study of health worker knowledge, attitudes and practices with respect to breastfeeding was undertaken in Kenya. A breastfeeding promotion campaign ensued, in which training of health workers was a major component. In 1989, the impact of this campaign was evaluated through a survey examining changes in health worker knowledge, attitudes and practices. The survey showed that considerable improvements in knowledge and substantial improvements in hospital practices have occurred, although none of these could be attributed to any single element of the breastfeeding promotion programme. Particularly undesirable practices which were common in 1982, such as separation of mother and baby, formula feeding and use of bottles have virtually disappeared from Kenyan hospitals. Recommendations regarding future programme directions are made.

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