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Can involving partners in breastfeeding counselling help first-time mothers breastfeed exclusively for six months?

Submission date
26/06/2026

Registration date
26/06/2026

Last Edited
30/06/2026

Recruitment status
Recruiting

Overall study status
Ongoing

Condition category
Pregnancy and Childbirth

[X] Prospectively registered
[_] Protocol
[_] Statistical analysis plan
[_] Results
[_] Individual participant data
[X] Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol
Not provided at time of registration

Contact information

Type(s)
Public, Principal investigator, Scientific

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Additional identifiers

National Medical Research Register
RSCH ID-26-04218-8KZ

Study information

Scientific Title

Partner-inclusive postpartum counselling versus breastfeeding friendly hospital initiative (BFHI) standard care to improve six-month exclusive breastfeeding among primiparous women

Study objectives

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)
Approved 30/04/2026, UMMC Medical Research Ethics Committee (UMMC-MREC) (University Malaya Medical Centre, Lembah Pantai, Kuala Lumpur, 59100, Malaysia; +60 03-79493209; ummc-mrec@ummc.edu.my), ref: 20251114-15878

Primary study design
Interventional

Allocation
Randomized controlled trial

Masking
Open (masking not used)

Control
Active

Assignment
Parallel

Purpose
Supportive care

Study type(s)

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Improving exclusive breastfeeding at six months among primiparous postpartum women.

Interventions
This is a two-arm, parallel-group randomized controlled trial. Eligible primiparous postpartum women and their partners will be randomly allocated in a 1:1 ratio to either the intervention or control group after providing written informed consent.

Regarding the randomisation method, participants will be randomly allocated using a computer-generated randomization sequence. The allocation sequence will be generated before recruitment, and assignments will be placed in sequentially numbered, opaque, sealed envelopes. After informed consent and completing the baseline assessment, the next envelope in sequence will be opened to determine group allocation.

Intervention group: Participants will receive routine Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) postpartum care plus a single structured partner-inclusive breastfeeding counselling session

before hospital discharge. The session will include a standardized educational video followed by face-to-face discussion with the research team to reinforce key messages, answer questions, and address breastfeeding concerns. Topics include breastfeeding techniques and positioning, common breastfeeding challenges, breast milk expression and storage, and practical and emotional partner support. The session will be delivered once during the postnatal admission.

Control group: Participants will receive routine postpartum care according to BFHI standards at University of Malaya Medical Centre without the additional partner-inclusive counselling session.

Participants in both groups will complete baseline questionnaires before discharge. Follow-up assessments will be conducted at 3 and 6 months postpartum to assess exclusive breastfeeding status and complete the study questionnaires.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
1. Exclusive breastfeeding at six months postpartum measured using the WHO 24-hour infant feeding recall method at 6 months postpartum

Key secondary outcome(s)
1. Maternal breastfeeding self-efficacy measured using the Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy Scale–Short Form (BSES-SF) at baseline, 3 months postpartum, 6 months postpartum

2. Partner breastfeeding attitudes measured using the Iowa Infant Feeding Attitude Scale for Partners (IIFAS-P) at baseline, 3 months postpartum, 6 months postpartum

Completion date
31/12/2027

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Primiparous women aged 18 years or older
2. Delivered a healthy singleton term infant (≥37 completed weeks' gestation)
3. Intend to exclusively breastfeed their infant
4. Recruited within 24–48 hours postpartum prior to hospital discharge
5. Able to understand the study information and provide written informed consent
6. Have a partner who is available, willing to participate in the counselling session and follow-up assessments, and able to provide written informed consent

Healthy volunteers allowed
Yes

Age group
Adult

Lower age limit
18 Years

Upper age limit

45 Years

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
0

Key exclusion criteria
1. Mothers with medical contraindications to breastfeeding
2. Infants requiring prolonged neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) admission or with significant medical conditions that preclude breastfeeding
3. Mothers or partners unable to understand the study information or communicate in the study languages
4. Mothers or partners with major psychiatric illness, cognitive impairment, or any condition that would limit participation or informed consent
5. Women who screen positive for intimate partner violence (IPV) using the HARK screening tool
6. Partners who are unavailable or unwilling to participate in the counselling session and follow-up assessments

Date of first enrolment
01/07/2026

Date of final enrolment
30/06/2027

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Malaysia

Sponsor information

Organisation
University Malaya Medical Centre

ROR
https://ror.org/00vkrxq08

Funder(s)

Funder type

Funder Name
Department of Medicine, University of Malaya

Alternative Name(s)
Faculty of Medicine - Universiti Malaya, Medicine Department - Faculty of Medicine - Universiti Malaya, medicineumalaya, University of Malaya Faculty of Medicine

Funding Body Type
Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype
Research institutes and centers

Location
Malaysia

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary
Not expected to be made available