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Ghana Health Service
Private Mail Bag
Ministries Post Office.
Accra. Ghana

My Ref. No. GHS/DGS/

Your Ref. No. ...

GPS ADDRESS: GA-143-4609

TEL.: +233 302 662 014

FAX: +233 302 666 808

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For Immediate Release

TO ALL MEDIA HOUSES

PRESS RELEASE

CELEBRATION OF WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK 2022

Ghana joins the global community to celebrate the 2022 World Breastfeeding Week from **1st to 7th August**. The global campaign is coordinated by the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) to raise awareness and galvanize action to support the effective practice of breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding provides unmatched health benefits for babies and mothers. It is the gold standard for infant and child nutrition with breastmilk being uniquely tailored to meet the health and growing needs of children. Breastfeeding also acts as babies' first vaccine, protecting them against many common childhood illnesses. Breastfeeding is key to sustainable development strategies post-pandemic, as it improves nutrition, ensures food security, and reduces inequalities between and within countries. It is a key to child survival and a developmental strategy for improvement in a country's economic gains which is an important issue as the country recovers from the pandemic.

Successful breastfeeding mothers enjoy a warm chain of support: health systems and health staff, family members, friends, community members and work colleagues. This warm chain is critical to the success of breastfeeding because their sharing of knowledge and information, pieces of advice and encouragement, support with household chores, call-ups and creation of an enabling environment all allow the work of breastfeeding easier on the mother.

This year's theme "**Step up for Breastfeeding - Educate and Support**" focuses on strengthening the capacity of actors that must protect, promote, and support breastfeeding across different levels of society.

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✉ dg@ghsmai.org 🌐 www.ghs.gov.gh

🐦 @_GHSofficial 📘 Ghana Health Service 📷 @ghanahealthserviceofficial

These actors make up the warm chain of support for breastfeeding. Revamping capacity of the actors in the warm chain through education and transformation of systems will ensure breastfeeding friendly health care facilities and supportive workplaces underpinned by evidence based national policies. Target audiences including governments, health systems, workplaces and communities will be informed, educated, and empowered to strengthen their capacity to provide and sustain breastfeeding-friendly environments for families in the post pandemic world. The campaign will highlight the links between breastfeeding and good nutrition, food security and reduction of inequalities.

The Ghana Health Service has dedicated the month of August to the celebration of breastfeeding with a series of activities planned. Join us as we celebrate the week and support all mothers to breastfeed as recommended.

SIGNED
DR. PATRICK KUMA-ABOAGYE
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

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