

PRESS RELEASE

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Valentine's Day Baby Receives Breastfeeding Support

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The first baby born on Valentine's Day at the D. Orlando Smith Hospital received a specially curated Breastfeeding Support Basket in effort to promote maternal and infant health through breastfeeding.

Chief Nursing Officer, Ms. Jascinth Hannibal said the initiative is aimed at promoting breastfeeding as a key public health priority and underscores the Ministry of Health's commitment to fostering a healthier population through breastfeeding advocacy.

Ms. Hannibal said, "Breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways to improve infant and maternal health. By providing support and resources, we want to encourage more mothers to choose breastfeeding, which has long-term health benefits for both baby and mother."

Ms. Hannibal added, "Breastfeeding is a priority initiative for the Ministry of Health, aligning with global health recommendations that promote exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life."

The basket was delivered by Ms. Hannibal, and Ms. Kimberly Herbert of Helping Hands Org. to the new Mom, Ms. Ashley Barker. Ms. Baker an experienced breastfeeding mother, also said she plans to continue to exclusively breastfeed.

The breastfeeding support basket included a breast pump, an informative breastfeeding support booklet produced by the Ministry of Health and other resources designed to assist mom in establishing and maintaining successful breastfeeding practices.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), breastmilk is the ideal food for infants. It is safe, clean and contains antibodies which help to protect against many common childhood illnesses. Breastfed children perform better on intelligence tests, are less likely to be overweight or obese and less prone to diabetes later in life. Women who breastfeed also have a reduced risk of breast and ovarian cancers.

The ministry plans to continue its advocacy efforts by providing education, resources, and engaging community partnerships and support to encourage

breastfeeding among mothers across the British Virgin Islands.

For more information on breastfeeding support initiatives, persons can contact the ministry at 468-2275.

The Ministry of Health and Social Development is committed to improving the health of the people of the Virgin Islands.