Airports in the United States - are they really Breastfeeding Friendly?

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BACKGROUND

Limerick provides a Workplace Lactation Program (WLP) to national Fortune 500 companies and municipalities. In the WLP offsite travel for work and needed advice regarding lactation facilities at various airports. Finding a lactation room can be the biggest challenge for the traveling breast pumping mother. Therefore, Limerick conducted a survey of the top 100 passenger volume airports in the US.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA, H.R. 3590) section 4207 of the law amends the fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), requiring an employer to provide hourly nursing mothers with a break time and a private place to express milk other than a bathroom, sheltered from view from intruders and coworkers and free from harassment and discipline, with the room under a key in the workplace. One of the major barriers for workers wanting to sustain breastfeeding is travel. In order to nourish the Healthy People 2020 Goal of 60.6% of babies receiving breast milk at 6 months, support and regulations will need to be established to help support the working traveling breast pumping mother.

OBJECTIVE

Determine which airports offer the minimum requirements for a breastfeeding mother; private space, other than a bathroom, with a chair, table and electrical outlet

STUDY DESIGN

A phone survey was conducted with the customer service representative service personnel for each airport to determine the minimum requirements for a lactation room. The overall airfare usage ranged from 45 million to 729 thousand.

The following were asked of each customer service representative:

- Airport Information
  - City
  - Country
  - Airport Name
  - Phone
  - Reference
- Is there a breast pumping room/ designated breastfeeding area located in airport? Yes/No
- Is the room in a private area specifically designated as "lactation room"? Yes/No
- Is the room inside or outside of the security checkpoint? Yes/No
- Is there a waiting area? Yes/No
- Is there a mirror present? Yes/No
- Is there a private area specifically designated for pumping? Yes/No
- Are there chairs available for use while you pump? Yes/No
- Is there air available within the security checkpoint? Yes/No
- Is there a private area specifically designated for breastfeeding? Yes/No
- Are there chairs available for use while you breastfeed? Yes/No
- Is there a private area specifically designated for feeding? Yes/No
- Is there a private area specifically designated for both pumping and feeding? Yes/No
- Is there a private space other than a bathroom with an electrical outlet, chair, and table present? Yes/No

RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37% (N=17)</td>
<td>reported having designated lactation rooms</td>
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<tr>
<td>26% (N=13)</td>
<td>reported having a room specifically designated as a lactation room</td>
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<tr>
<td>25% (N=12)</td>
<td>offered no comment as to what was available in the lactation room</td>
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<td>17% (N=8)</td>
<td>had no comment on the availability of lactation services, provision, electrical outlet, chair, table</td>
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<tr>
<td>12% (N=6)</td>
<td>offered a private space other than a bathroom with electrical outlet, table and chair</td>
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The 8 airports that met minimum requirements are:

1. San Francisco International - California
2. Seattle-Tacoma International - Washington
3. Minneapolis-Saint Paul International - Minnesota
4. Dallas/Fort Worth International - Texas
5. Phoenix Sky Harbor International - Arizona
7. Austin-Bergstrom International - Texas
8. Brownsville South Padre Island International - Texas

5. Is there a breast pumping room/ designated breastfeeding area located in airport? Yes/No
6. Is the room in a private area specifically designated as "lactation room"? Yes/No
7. Is there a waiting area? Yes/No
8. Is there a mirror present? Yes/No
9. Is there a private area specifically designated for pumping? Yes/No
10. Are there chairs available for use while you pump? Yes/No
11. Is there air available within the security checkpoint? Yes/No
12. Is there a private area specifically designated for breastfeeding? Yes/No
13. Are there chairs available for use while you breastfeed? Yes/No
14. Is there a private area specifically designated for feeding? Yes/No
15. Is there a private space other than a bathroom with an electrical outlet, chair, and table present? Yes/No

DISCUSSION

Limerick found the results of the survey informative. Results show only 8 out of 100 airports in the US provide a private lactation room that meets the minimum requirements of having a private area that a woman can use to breastfeed and a private place to express milk other than a bathroom, shielded from view from intruders and coworkers and free from harassment and discipline, with the room under a key in the workplace. One of the major barriers for workers wanting to sustain breastfeeding is travel. In order to nourish the Healthy People 2020 Goal of 60.6% of babies receiving breast milk at 6 months, support and regulations will need to be established to help support the working traveling breast pumping mother.

CONCLUSION

Only 8% of the airports surveyed provided the minimum requirements for a lactation room. However, 62% stated they were breastfeeding friendly. Airports need to be educated to the minimum requirements for a lactation room.

REFERENCES