

Statement of Interest

Mrs. Anne Batterjee

Public Health Educator / Breastfeeding Advocate

My interest in serving on the WABA Steering Committee would be the culmination of years of work in the field of Breastfeeding Advocacy. It would allow me the opportunity not only to broaden the base of global understanding of the importance of WABA as the leading organization of the global breastfeeding movement, but also to work first hand on implementing the WABA LLLI Global Peer Counseling Program and other important global program initiatives.

I have worked in various positions in the field of Patient Health Education and public health since moving to Saudi Arabia with my husband in 1970. Teamed together, my husband and I worked to help found the first Cancer Societies in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the 1980s. I continue to work on Cancer awareness and women's health issues maintaining close ties to both government and private entities. In the early nineties, my work shifted slightly to a more positive method of helping improve the health of societies by focusing on methods to improve the rate of breastfeeding; breastfeeding always an important personal choice became the clear method of acceptable intervention to promote health.

In 1994, I was trained by the Saudi Ministry of Health to be a Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) Breastfeeding Counselor and Trainer. Since that time I have actively worked to train hundreds of doctors, nurses, and patient educators in the skills needed to support mothers who choose to breastfeed. I actively advocate for implementation of BFHI in both the government and private sector. As an LLLI Leader, LLLI PCP Administrator, I also am always trying to find means of improving mother support networks. We have seen this in many instances and personally through the Peer Counselor training I provided for Sharjah, UAE. We have experienced the impact motivating mothers has to successfully bringing about a positive change in social habits.

Through our family owned business, my daughter and I, Dr. Modia Batterjee, own the first and only Women's Health Awareness and Breastfeeding Resource Center(s) in the Gulf States. All levels of mother to mother support inclusive of monthly support group meetings are provided through these facilities.

I always strive to maintain close ties with International organizations in the field of breastfeeding (WABA, all its core partners especially LLLI, IBFAN and IAW) and believe strongly in the importance of networking and information sharing. To be allowed to hold a position on the WABA Steering Committee is probably the greatest honor. It also positions me locally and regionally to add strength to the messages and training that can be offered and for which we all advocate. It is an important goal to introduce, network, translate and distribute the knowledge and experience that they possess to bring to the Kingdom, the Arab World and beyond to all areas of the globe.