Message from the Editor

2010 came and went very quickly for the WABA Secretariat as for the most part of the year, we were engaged in the planning and organising of the WABA Global Breastfeeding Partners Forum in Penang which was followed by the WABA Breastfeeding Partners Meeting. In this issue of e-WABALink, we would like to share with you some of the highlights of the very successful Forum.

2011 is a very significant year for WABA; significant because WABA turns 20 on 14 February 2011 and plans are in store for a year long celebration. Strategies for the future are being developed as it is also time to take stock of where we are as a movement and how we want to move forward in these challenging times. We would also like to share with you some exciting plans for 2011, among others the “youthful” theme of the 2011 World Breastfeeding Week, the WABA Global Breastfeeding Quilt Initiative and many more stories.

Towards a great year ahead!

Julianna Lim Abdullah, IBCLC
Editor, e-WABALink
WABA Announces the WBW 2011 Theme

WABA is pleased to announce the World Breastfeeding Week theme for 2011 focusing on engaging and mobilising youth intergenerational work with the catchy slogan of: “Talk to Me! Breastfeeding – A 3-D Experience”. The theme deals with communication at various levels and between various sectors.

Communication is an important part of promoting and supporting breastfeeding. We live in an age where global communities can instantly connect at a moment’s notice. New lines of communication are being formed each day, and we have the ability to use these information channels to broaden our horizons and use new media to provide breastfeeding messages to our peers. Through the use of both traditional and new forms of communication, we can help spread breastfeeding information beyond our immediate borders to activate dialogue and transform words into action. This concept encompasses cross-generation, cross-sector, cross-gender, and cross-culture communication and encourages mentorship and outreach.

The key writers for this year’s WBW materials will be Ms Katherine Houng and Amura Hildalgo of the WABA Youth Group.

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Current News

Breastfed baby boys may do better in school later

Breastfeeding babies for longer than six months may give them a brain boost that lasts well into their school years, a new study suggests, and this benefit may be particularly important for boys.

The new Australian study, which was published in the journal Pediatrics, found that 10-year-olds who were breastfed for longer than six months as infants scored higher on standardised math, reading, writing, and spelling tests than children who were breastfed for less than six months.

However, when researchers adjusted their findings to correct for other factors associated with breastfeeding that might also be influencing academic achievement, like the mother’s age, family income, and how often the children were read to at home, only breastfed boys continued to see an advantage.

Researchers wonder if boys may benefit more from the "neuroprotective" benefits of breastmilk than girls, or if the hormones in breastmilk work differently on baby boys than on baby girls.

Another theory is that breastfeeding may help boys, who normally lag in development behind girls, mature more quickly.

The researchers say the results bolster what experts already recommend on breastfeeding.

“We know that breast milk, if the mother has a good diet, is the optimum and ‘best’ way of feeding a newborn baby – boys and girls – until at least 6 months and beyond,” said lead researcher Wendy H. Oddy, of the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research in Perth, Australia.


Obama orders breastfeeding policy for federal workplace

President Obama is asking federal personnel officials to draft “appropriate workplace accommodations” for federal employees who are nursing mothers.

The president issued a memo in Dec 2010 to the Office of Personnel Management asking that the new workplace accommodations be published when ready.

The changes are mandated by provisions in the health-care overhaul bill passed this year that require new breastfeeding rights, primarily for hourly workers in the private and public sectors. But Obama asked the federal government to go a step further by establishing new guidelines for all federal employees, no matter their status, according to White House aides.

The federal legislation assures that women will not be discriminated against or fired for breastfeeding or pumping breast milk during breaks or lunch. It also provides tax breaks to employers who establish special rooms for breastfeeding mothers or that rent lactation-related equipment.


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e-WABAlink • Issue 3/2010 • December 2010/January 2011
Art Gallery of Alberta apologises and changes breastfeeding policy

The Art Gallery of Alberta has rescinded a policy barring breastfeeding in gallery spaces after an Edmonton mother complained. Art gallery member Jill Janicki was asked to leave the Edward Burtynsky exhibit last week after she tried to feed her seven-month-old daughter on a bench in the centre of the gallery.

To breastfeed, Jill used a breastfeeding cover, a piece of cloth draped around her neck. About two minutes into the feeding, a security guard approached and told her she would have to leave. The reason: no food or drink is allowed near the artwork.

Jill’s husband Modest Janicki sent a letter to the museum’s executive director, Gilles Hébert, on Tuesday and copied it to several media outlets.

“There should be no limitations whatsoever at the AGA when it comes to breastfeeding,” he wrote. “That is the right way, the legal way and the modern way.”

Less than 24 hours after the e-mail was sent, Hébert responded, via e-mail:

“As a professional museum dedicated to the preservation and presentation of art, the AGA must maintain policies that ensure the safety of the works of art in our care,” he wrote.

We also feel strongly that we are here for the people of Edmonton and Alberta and therefore we must take every opportunity to provide our visitors with a welcoming environment. It is after all the notion of ‘your AGA’ that guides our actions. Therefore, in an effort to underline accessibility while promoting the Gallery as place for all, we are rescinding the policy regarding mothers breastfeeding in the gallery spaces. Mothers breastfeeding were always welcome to use non-gallery spaces within the facility. Now they can, if they so choose, breastfeed in the galleries.”

Source: The Vancouver Sun (www.vancouversun.com/health/Gallery+Alberta+apologizes+changes+breastfeeding+policy/4015453/story.html)

UN, religious leaders promote exclusive breastfeeding in Indonesia

Faced with a marked decrease in exclusive breastfeeding in Indonesia, the United Nations has teamed up with Government and religious leaders to promote a practice that is proven to protect newborns and infants from disease, illness and impaired development.

As Indonesia, the world’s fourth most populous country, commemorates national Mothers’ Day in Dec 2010, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist and Hindu leaders pledged at a conference led by the Ministries of Health and Religious Affairs to develop an action plan with their clerics to spread key information about the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months.

“Religious leaders have the power to persuade their followers about the importance of breastfeeding, a simple life-saving practice that is referred to in all the Holy Scripts including the Quran, the Bible, the Vedas and the Tripitaka,” UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Representative Angela Kearney said.

“The health of the nation is dependent upon a shared vision and shared action that can only come through practical partnerships. Every religion accepts a responsibility to guide its followers, to show wisdom and foresight in enabling people to make the right choices in life. Today, we are focusing on a critical health issue, where our collective voices can offer life-saving guidance to families.”


Motherhood keeping Dion busy

The Canadian pop singer who recently gave birth to twins and was assisted in her breastfeeding by an INFANT Canada member from Montreal has this to say about her breastfeeding experience:

“It’s about bonding and skin-on-skin contact and not rushing the moment,” she says. “Everyone can bathe them or change them, but nursing is a bond no one else has.”

Source: Facebook posting from Al-Bidayah Centre.

Australian singer Dannii Minogue “Absolutely Loves” Breastfeeding

Dannii Minogue, who raises 5-month-old son Ethan with boyfiend Kris Smith, really enjoys breastfeeding.

She said, “I love it. I absolutely love it. It’s the weirdest thing, because before I had the baby, when woman talked about breast feeding, I’d be a bit like, what ever, what’s the big deal? Do it or don’t right?

“But then you have the baby and every cell in your body is crying out to feed this baby. It’s an incredible thing. I don’t want to stop.”

The Australian singer loves motherhood so much, she wants to have another child.

She added, “I never thought I was very maternal, and I was always so busy with work, and a baby just seemed like something I was never going to do.”

Source: celebritybabyscoop.com
Current News

Largest Human Pink Ribbon Record broken

Women in Saudi Arabia made history on Oct 28, 2010, shattering the existing Guinness Book of World Records in the formation of the largest human pink ribbon chain emphasizing global awareness in the battle against breast cancer. The World record breaking event was held in Jeddah, Al Bidiyah under the patronage of the Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz Foundation and Al Zahra Breast Cancer Association with the support of over 6000 women formed the largest ever human pink ribbon!

Dr. Modia Batterjee; official spokesperson for the event and HRH Princess Reema bint Bandar bin Sultan Al-Saud was responsible for the conception and implementation of this ground-breaking event and the Zahra Breast Cancer Association of which she is a founding member.

Each of the over 6,000 women who entered the stadium was given a flyer entitled “Breastfeeding Reduces Your Risk of Developing Breast Cancer.” The flyer briefly explains the link between breastfeeding and breast cancer. It also provides contact information to reach the Al Bidayah Breastfeeding Resource Center for further information and support.

“I don’t know if the rest of the world actually realises or appreciates what a seemingly impossible feat this really was to achieve in a deeply cultured and strictly religious country like Saudi Arabia. Logistically speaking, the odds were against us. Since females are prohibited from driving here what that means is that every single woman who participated in the event was driven to the venue by a man. Organising and pulling off an event like this was a daunting task in a country where mass gatherings are discouraged and where men and women mingling together in public places are strictly forbidden” said Dr Modia.

There were no men allowed inside the Ministry of Education Sports Stadium, which had never before been used to host an event for women.

News from Core Partners

WABA Global Breastfeeding Partners’ Forum Calls For More Concerted Action to Protect, Promote and Support Breastfeeding!

The WABA Global Breastfeeding Partners Forum (GBPF), held in Penang between 17-19 October 2010, called for action on common goals to allow mothers to be with their babies. Organised to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Innocenti Declaration, the Forum involved over 160 participants from more than 35 countries.

The Forum’s theme was Enabling Mothering: Keeping Mothers and Babies Together, highlighted the risks to our societies from the increasing separation of women from their infants as a result of hospital practices, social, workplace and economic demands. The separation of mothers from their infants contributes to failure to breastfeed, and can adversely affect the mother’s and the child’s mental, emotional, and physical health. “The world must recognise that women have the right to be with their young children, and children have the right to have access to their mothers,” said Dr Felicity Savage, Chair of WABA and Honorary Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Child Health, London, UK. New research is increasingly evident revealing that there are long term social and physiological benefits to keeping mothers and babies together and with extended breastfeeding. “To accomplish this, maternity hospitals must recognise this need, and the workplace must recognise that women’s roles as workers can be made compatible with their roles as mothers.”

“Malaysia was honoured to hold this major conference on breastfeeding, the first of its kind in the country and to also celebrate 20 years of Innocenti and also the work of WABA based in Penang, Malaysia. The conference reminded us that breastfeeding is the natural way, the ecological way, the economical way and the healthy way; and that we need to do much more to ensure the practice of breastfeeding is the norm”, noted Professor Dato Anwar Fazal, Chairperson Emeritus of WABA, and Director of the Right Livelihood College based in Penang. He added that, “this event brought together the worlds leaders who are working on protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding worldwide.”

The Forum was organised by the WABA Global Secretariat in Penang; in collaboration with WABA Core international Partner organisations: The Academy for Breastfeeding Medicine (ABM), International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN), International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA), La Leche League International (LLL), and Wellstart International (WI).

See more at: http://www.waba.org.my/
Malaycon by Dr. Alka Kuthe

Some think it was exotic, I think it was an educational and friendship bonanza. These are my feelings about WABA GLOBAL BREASTFEEDING PARTNERS FORUM at Penang from 17th to 19th October 2010.

The welcome ceremony was one of the unique and scintillating events which I witnessed. The melodious performance by WABA Secretariat team was simply amazing. Listening to the pioneer and first Co-ordinator of the WABA Secretariat, Hon. Anwar Fazal [Chairperson Emeritus] was a light-house for mother and child care promoters, protectors and supporters. The knowledge and the experience of Hon. Miriam Labbok, an organiser of Innocenti meetings was spilling out and spread over the minds of the alert gathering. Hats off to both of them! The series of plenary sessions were well informative, with the special mention of Elise Van Rooyen, Mimi de Maza, Audrey Naylor, Paige Smith, Elaine Cote, J Solomon, Rukhsana Haider, Renu Khanna. I attended many workshops and all of them were excellent with the special emphasised mention about the vividity of the GENDER ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION. Quilt display showed international harmony among the breastfeeding workers all over the world. My participation in the quilt gave me great excitement.

Above all these, there was wonderful cultural programme in which fashion show presented by us, Maharashtrian Indians truly reflected unity in diversity and received grand applause from the gathering. I personally sang a song in Hindi, our National language which was enjoyed by audience by dancing.

The venue of the conference was nature-clad beauty of Malaysia. We enjoyed the hospitality, the food and the stay. The whole event served as a source of inspiration and the memories will be cherished for a long.

Kudos from Susan Siew

Kudos to the WABA team for a well planned and executed Forum! It had sessions for learning and exchange of experiences and new information, elements that entertained, time for networking, and it provided participants a safe space for intense discussions and debate on challenging issues. Thank you.

I enjoyed the Forum and the celebrations. It was good to meet up with old friends and to make new ones.

A Reflection by Dr. Nora Alkarji

By Dr. Nora Alkarji, pediatric consultant, IBCLC, in, director of breastfeeding program in FM & PHC ... NGCSC / KAMC, Riyadh

Dr. Elham alghamdi, pharmacist, member of breastfeeding committee in NGCSC / KAMC Riyadh

As we reflect back on the recent breastfeeding forum in Penang/Malaysia, we pleased to have been part of this event.

Representatives from many different countries attended the event, which displayed worldwide enthusiasm. The information provided by the workshop was relevant and the speakers were informative and knowledgeable. The forum gave us an opportunity to meet breastfeeding partners and some of the key role players involved in breastfeeding. Attending such event gave us a chance to reflect Saudi Arabia efforts in breastfeeding promotion. The knowledge that we have gained from this experience will definitely contribute to the empowerment and expansion to promote, support and protect breastfeeding promotion as well as empower training in lactation management in Saudi Arabia.

Youth Involvement in the future

The meeting was so wonderful and perfect. All organisation responsible for breastfeeding advocacy had been beautifully united and demonstrated the power to fight the world.

The academic perspective is very helpful for the protection and support of future work in breastfeeding and child health. I really appreciate the youth involvement in future WABA work.

Note from Secretariat: WABA thanks all the GBPF participants, facilitators and presenters involved in making the event a success and for supporting us also in our celebration.
**News from Core Partners**

Norwegian Ambassador Ms Ann Ollestad Launches the Global Report on Infant Feeding

The report on “The State of Breastfeeding in 33 Countries: 2010, Tracking Infant and Young Child Feeding Policies and Programmes Worldwide” said that globally out of 136 million babies born each year, only about 50 million practice exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and 86 million don’t.

“In 33 countries where an assessment of policies and programmes on infant and young child feeding was done, out of 78 million born each year, 42 million are sub-optimally fed. For India, these numbers are 26 million born and 20 million do not practice optimal feeding,” the report said. For the report, national groups in 33 countries conducted assessments of local infant breastfeeding and young child feeding programs and policies using guidelines from the World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi) tool kit.

The report said that almost 8.1 million under-five children die each year – 22,000 everyday – in the world, more than 2.6 million in South Asia and majority being less than one year old because of newborn infections, diarrhoea, pneumonia and associated malnutrition.

According to World Health Organisation and UNICEF, 1.5 million children’s lives can be saved with proper breastfeeding and timely and appropriate complementary feeding after six months along with continued breastfeeding.

Norwegian Ambassador to India Ann Ollestad, who released the report, said that it is especially significant since the nations are edging closer to the deadline of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) in 2015. The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency jointly support IBFAN’s World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi) launched last year.

She mentioned that booming economic growth does not always translate into more effective policies for protecting children from mortality and malnutrition. She mentioned that this is an opportunity to take action by all countries including industrialised ones.

The MDGs refer to the eight international development goals that all 192 United Nations member states have agreed to achieve by the year 2015. These include eradicating extreme poverty and reducing child mortality rates.

*For more information visit: www.worldbreastfeedingtrends.org*

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**International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA)**

Conference and Annual Meeting 2011

July 13-17, 2011

**Raising the Bar: Enhancing Practices and Improving Health Outcomes**

San Diego, California, USA

The 2011 International Lactation Consultant Association Conference, *Raising the Bar: Enhancing Practices and Improving Health Outcomes*, is being held at the Town and Country Resort in San Diego, California, USA from July 13-17, 2011. This five-day conference combines research and practice presentations with clinical and research skill development.

The ILCA annual conference showcases speakers with exceptional information, expertise, and presentation skills in order to provide quality information to attendees.

*For more information visit : www.ilca.org*

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**The Revised 3rd Edition of Wellstart’s Lactation Management Self-Study Modules, Level now available in Spanish**

The Spanish version of the Wellstart Lactation Management Self-Study Modules is now available for download without charge.

“We hope that making this available will improve the care of mothers and babies throughout the Spanish speaking areas of the world and help achieve the goal of exclusive breastfeeding for six months and continued breastfeeding to two years and beyond as nutritious complementary foods are introduced” said Audrey Naylor, CEO of Wellstart International.

This tool is intended for use by medical and nursing students as they begin their clinical assignments but can be also be used by anyone who has never been exposed to breastfeeding issues before or those who need a quick review. Wellstart International hopes that this tool will be able to help increase the general knowledge of about lactation and breastfeeding promotion among the world’s health care providers irrespective of areas of specialisation.

To download the Module in Spanish, please visit http://www.wellstart.org
“I’m 22. And I’m a breastfeeding advocate”
A reflection by Katherine Houng, WABA Youth Group Coordinator

When we think of breastfeeding advocates, what image comes to mind? Women and mothers perhaps, but certainly not young people. With a whole slew of social causes before us, breastfeeding inadvertently drops to the bottom of the pile as issues such as climate change or infectious diseases take precedence. But what most young people don’t know is that breastfeeding is connected to many of these issues at the most fundamental level.

Look around you, young people are everywhere! As students, professionals, caregivers, and active members of society, we are plugged into the heart of many grassroots movements, and breastfeeding should be no exception. It’s time for us to gear up and get the message out!

At the Global Breastfeeding Partners’ Forum in October 2010, the WABA Youth team was met with overwhelming support when we pledged our efforts to find new ways to communicate these timeless breastfeeding messages. We were inspired by pioneers who had dedicated their careers and lives to research and advocacy, keeping in mind that their work is anchored in the concept of “paying it forward”. As new advocates, we have the power to use their strides to make the case for breastfeeding and reinforce the fact that it should be supported in our communities.

Why does breastfeeding matter to us? Is it the fact that formula companies are aggressively marketing their products to young families in order to raise their sales targets? Is it the fact that breastfeeding provides a household with financial stability and reduces the use of non-recyclable waste products? Is it also the fact that we will one day be faced with critical questions when we decide on how to feed our own children? The answer to these questions is Yes!

Now that we know the facts, what’s the challenge? Young people are easy to mobilise, but hard to sustain. Getting the information out is only half the battle. The rest relies on the *use* of this information. We want to feel energised and autonomous about a cause, and our power lies in action. The messages we share must continue to be compelling and innovative to reach a wider audience.

So where do we begin, and how do we create a message that resonates? What our team learned at the conference was the power of peer-to-peer dialogue. Hence, the inspiration for this year’s World Breastfeeding Week theme – ‘Talk to Me! Breastfeeding, a 3D Experience’. Young people want to make a difference in their communities, and sparking dialogue is the easiest way.

If you’re young and want to find out ways to jump-start breastfeeding outreach in your communities, please connect with us at youth.

waba@gmail.com or find us on Facebook (Search “WABA Youth”) or Twitter (@WABAyouth).

If you’re an experienced professional and breastfeeding advocate and would like to mentor a young advocate, please email katherine.houng@waba.org.my
News from Secretariat

WABA Secretariat Awards 2010

In recognition of the substantial contributions made by our global leaders who are working on protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding actively worldwide, WABA conferred special WABA Secretariat Awards to outstanding breastfeeding advocates at the recent Global Breastfeeding Partners Forum opening ceremony in October 2010. The Awards were given out by Prof Dato’ Dr Anwar Fazal, who is the Chairperson Emeritus of WABA.

One outstanding leader was the former Co-Chair of WABA’s Steering Committee, Dr. Raj Anand, who was awarded the “Soul of Breastfeeding” award in recognition of his life long, invaluable contribution to breastfeeding network as an active advisor, spiritualist, speaker, activist and professor of pediatrics. The Spirit of Cecily Williams was awarded to Elisabet Helsing, WABA’s International Advisory Council Co-Chair. Award for long service was conferred to WABA’s Ex-Director Susan Siew, Nand Wadhawani for Spearheading e-activism in WABA, and the Most Active Task Force Award to Rebecca Magalhaes, Paulina Smith, Prashant Gangal of the WABA Mother Support Task Force. Renu Khanna was awarded for Mainstreaming Gender in WABA, Michael Latham and Penny Van Esterik for Nurturing the Youth, and Rita Rahayu and Nor Kamariah Mohamad Alwi are Outstanding Young Malaysian Breastfeeding Advocates.

On behalf of the global breastfeeding network, WABA is proud to express our appreciation and congratulations to all the Awardees for their invaluable contributions and dedication to our cause.

The WABA Global Breastfeeding Quilt Initiative

The WABA Global Breastfeeding Quilt was successfully launched by the Honourable Ms Chong Eng, Member of Parliament and advisor of the Penang State Government’s ‘Women, Family and Community Development Committee’, and founding chairperson of the Good Governance and Gender Equality Society (3Gs) initiative.

The Global Breastfeeding Quilt Initiative is a poignant and meaningful WABA project involving the world’s community in celebrating and commemorating the work of the global network in support of breastfeeding.

Apart from the physical quilt, the WABA Global Breastfeeding Quilt is also put together virtually on the website at http://globalbreastfeedingquilt.net/virtualquilt.htm On-line visitors and panel makers can click on the panels to view their contribution or learn more about the craft person and the theme behind the creative designs.

On behalf of the global breastfeeding network, WABA is proud to express our appreciation and congratulations to all the Awardees for their invaluable contributions and dedication to our cause.

The WABA Global Breastfeeding Quilt is an on-going initiative. WABA hopes that eventually the physical quilt will travel on a world tour and display.

WABA encourages breastfeeding groups to continue to join us in this growing initiative. To submit a Quilt panel please visit http://globalbreastfeedingquilt.net/ for instructions and more information about the Quilt.

congratulations to all!
WABA is pleased to announce that the upcoming BAP Course is now an approved provider of CERPs by IBLCE Regional Office in Australia.

The total CERPS allocated: 40.5L, 2.5E, 20.5R CERPs
The CERP’s Approval Number: C 21108M

The course is specially designed for doctors and other senior health professionals from the region who are responsible nationally or locally for:
- clinical care of mothers and infants
- teaching short courses
- pre-service curricula for health professionals
- advocacy and policy development
- the implementation of programmes such as the BFHI.

The Infant Feeding Consortium directs the 4-week course Breastfeeding: Practice and Policy at the Institute of Child Health, London, and they will be responsible for organising the course in collaboration with WABA to be held in Penang, Malaysia. Teaching will be conducted mainly in English, with some use of Bahasa Malaysia.

If you or your colleagues are interested in applying, please fill in the application form and mail details to WABA at waba@waba.org.my.

To view the brochure please go to http://www.waba.org.my/pdf/bap2011brochure.pdf

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**Breastfeeding Advocacy & Practice**

*A Regional Outreach Course by the Infant Feeding Consortium, From the Institute of Child Health, London, and WABA.*

21 February – 5 March 2011. Penang, Malaysia

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**Other Upcoming Events**

**SAVE THE DATES**

**20th Breastfeeding Policy and Practice Course (BFPP), London | 6-24 June 2011.**

The BFPP is a masters-level course that is the only advanced international training course on breastfeeding and related topics available worldwide. It is designed for senior health professionals who lead, coordinate, or commission work on infant feeding; or who teach others or find themselves acting as a resource-person or giving strategic direction on breastfeeding and infant nutrition.

This course is taught by the same team as the South East Asian Regional Breastfeeding Advocacy and Practice course in Penang. The London BFPP course is recommended especially for those who live outside the SE Asian Region. Please go to http://www.waba.org.my/pdf/BFPP-london-brochure.pdf to view the 2011 London Course brochure.