

# IDENTIFYING CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO EARLY CESSATION OF EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING

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## Background

- Despite well documented maternal and infant benefits of exclusive breastfeeding (EBF), in the U.S. exclusive breastfeeding continues to be a challenge
- Inpatient EBF rates are typically higher than rates post discharge, and EBF rates after hospital discharge are a nationwide challenge
- The national average of exclusive breastfeeding at 1 months of life is 57.8% (CDC, 2022).

## Problem

Inpatient EBF rates have been as high as approximately 80%. However, EBF rates fall as low as below 30% within 2-3 weeks post-discharge. This decline is well below the national average and has long term implications for mother and baby.

## Purpose

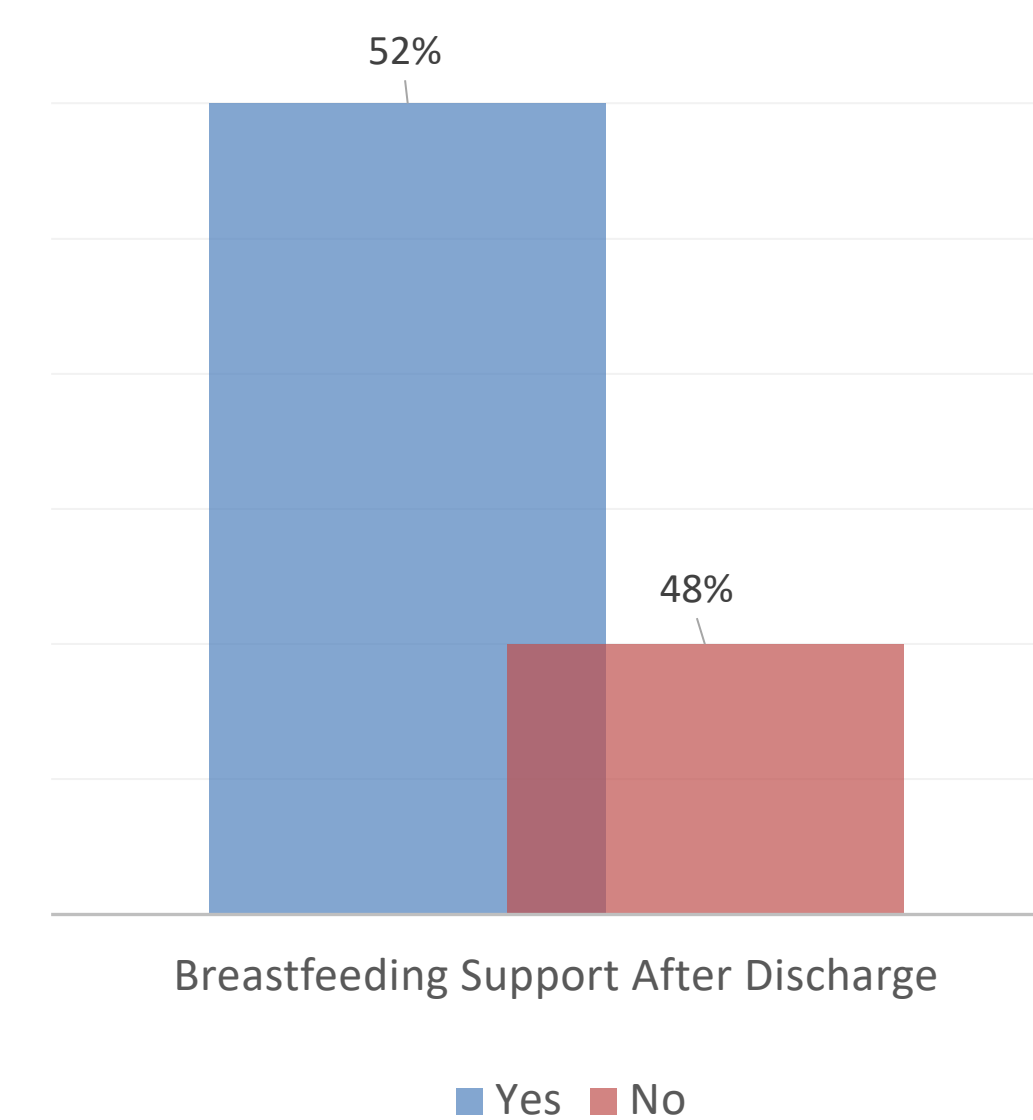
The purpose of this project is to understand the contributing factors of decreased exclusive breastfeeding rates after discharge from a Southern California hospital and will be conducted in multiple phases. Phase I, and the topic of this project, was conducted via an anonymous survey to understand why mothers stop exclusively breastfeeding when they do. Phase II, to be completed at a later time, will implement interventions tailored to the findings in Phase I.

## Methods

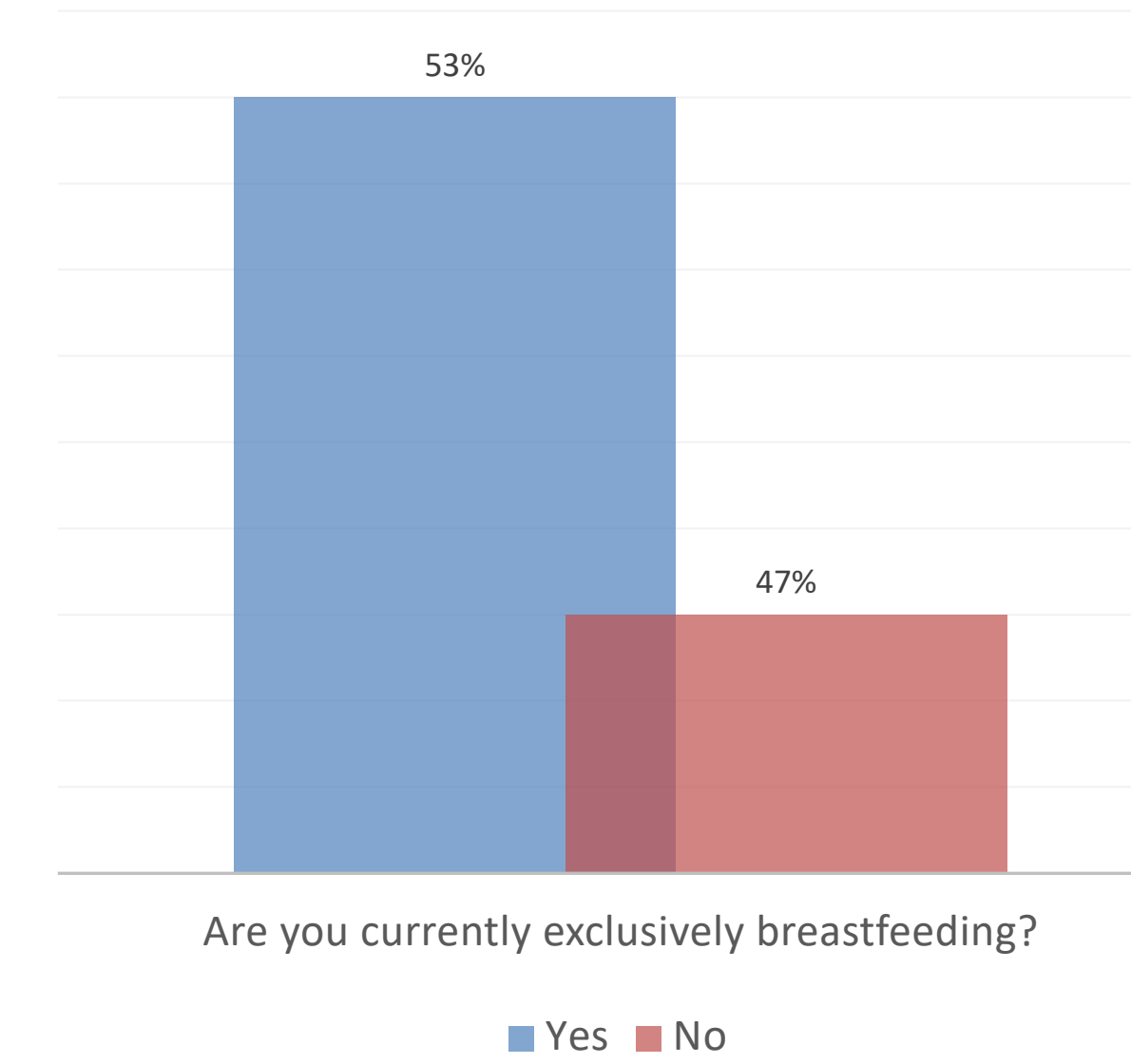
- **Design** Pilot quality improvement project utilizing the Iowa Model
- **Setting** Outpatient pediatric clinic within a large hospital system in Southern California
- **Participants** Mothers from various ethnic backgrounds living in a low-income community in Southern California
- **Data Collection** Data collected anonymously via 60 surveys

## Results

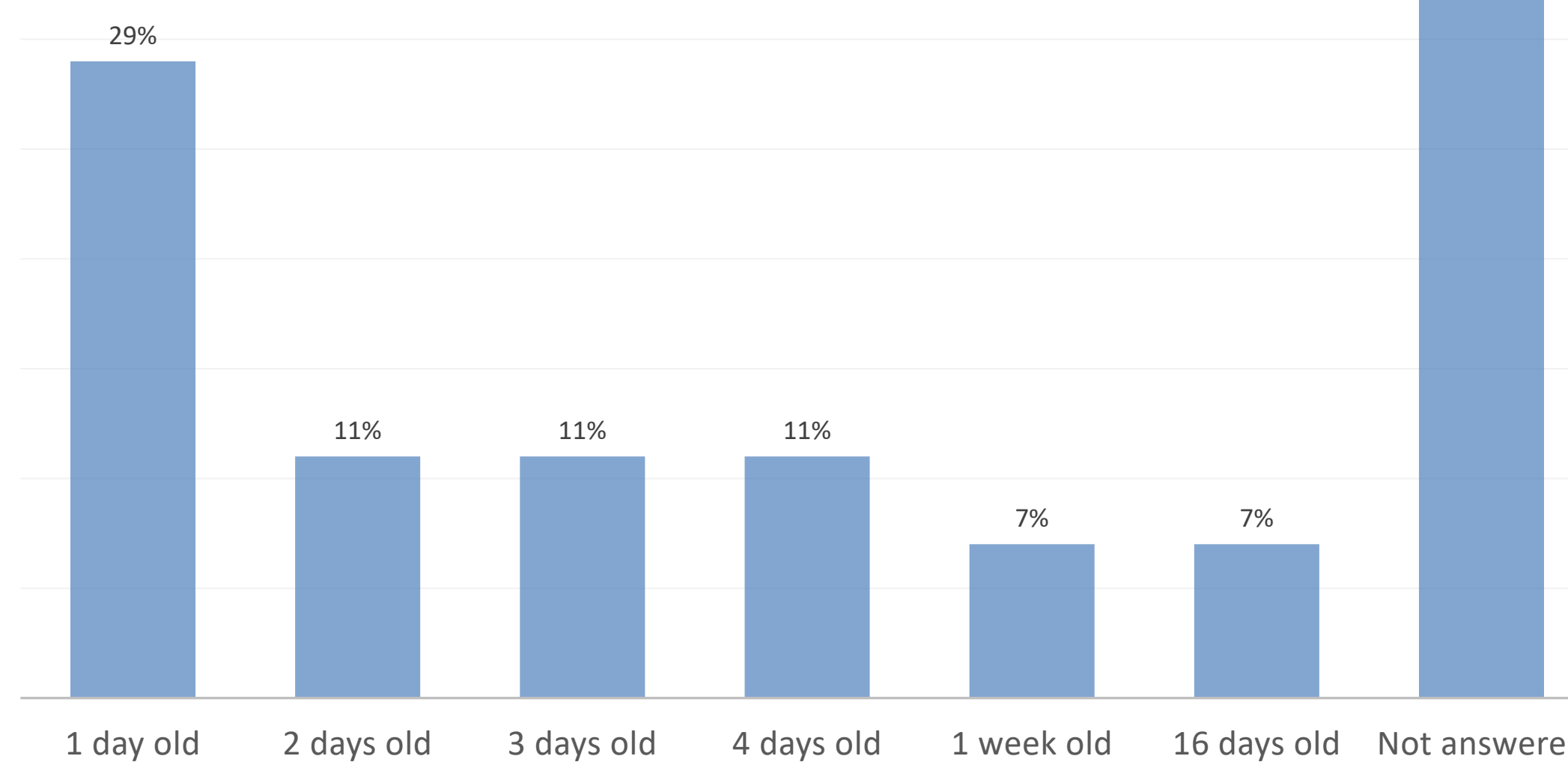
Breastfeeding Support After Discharge



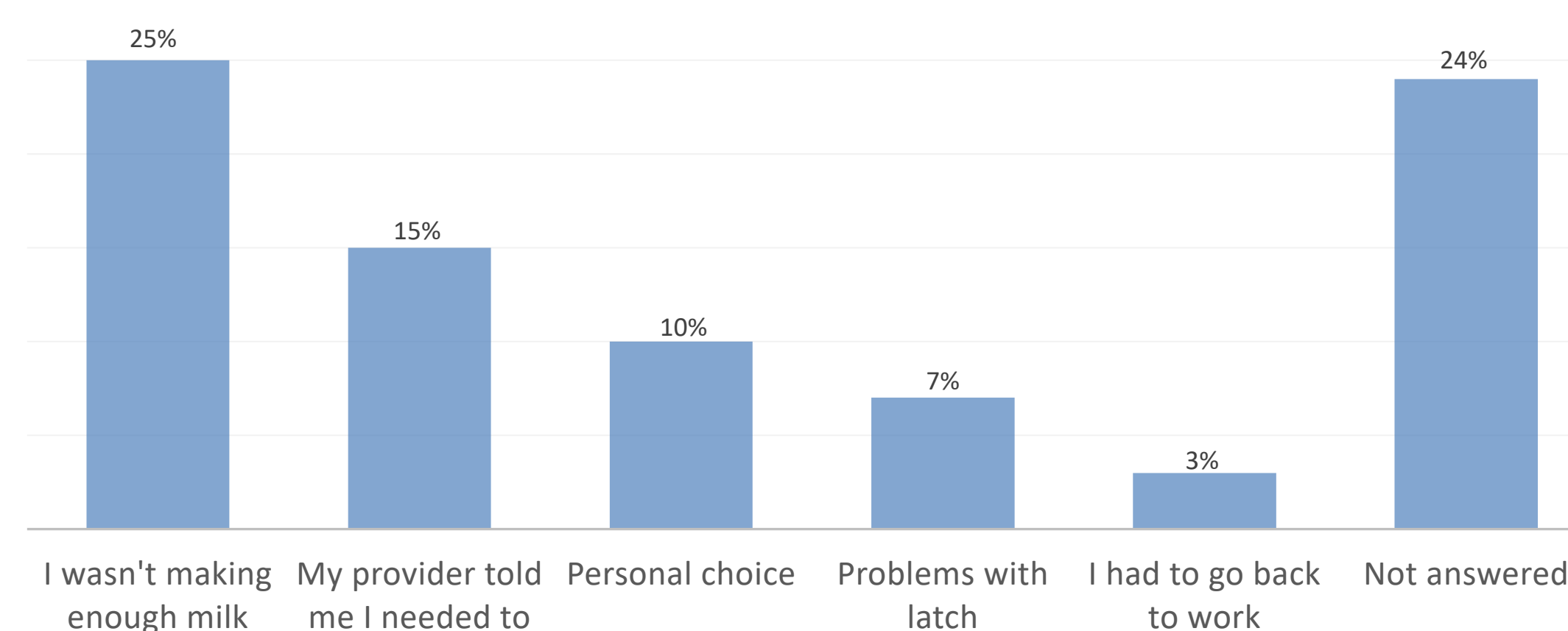
Breastfeeding Exclusivity



Age of Infant When Formula Began



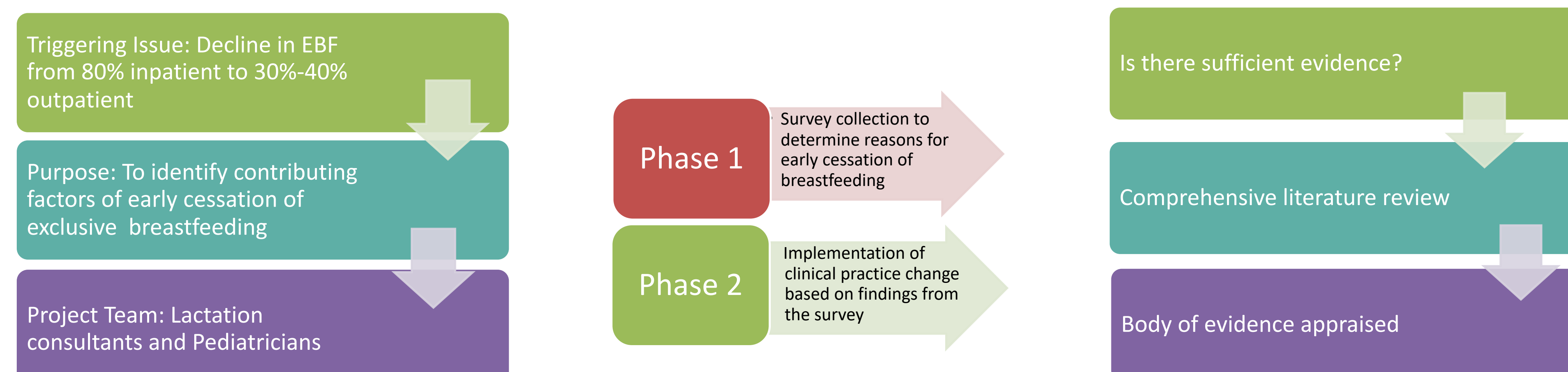
Reasons for Formula Supplementation



- 52% of mothers were exclusively breastfeeding up to 1 month of the infant's life
- Almost 62% of mothers started formula within 4 days of life
- 25% of mothers perceive that they have insufficient milk supply
- 15% of mothers were told by their provider to begin formula supplementation
- 48% of mothers state they did not receive breastfeeding help after discharge

## Framework

Iowa Model of Evidence-Based Practice to Promote Excellence in Health Care



## Discussion

The most common reasons for early cessation of include:

- Maternal perception of insufficient supply
- Provider recommendation
- Trouble with breastfeeding, which is supported by the research.

Additionally, almost 50% of mothers did not receive breastfeeding support after discharge and formula was most frequently started within 4 days of life.

## Limitations

- Limited number of surveys collected
- Data collected was self-reported and subjective
- All surveys were collected from the same facility, contributing to lack of generalizability
- Study design lacked pre and post intervention data

## Recommendations

- Weekend lactation support for all mothers
- Maternal education on appropriate milk supply
- Increased prenatal education and breastfeeding support
- Increased pediatrician education on breastfeeding support

## Conclusion

- Early prenatal education on the benefits of breastfeeding to mother and baby can assist with increasing the likelihood of mothers desiring to breastfeed.
- Offering early and consistent support both during hospitalization for delivery and after discharge to all mothers and increasing provider education and support of breastfeeding is vital as well.

## References

