

Making a business case for breastfeeding promotion: an evidence-based approach

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A new mother faces a choice whether or not to (exclusively) breastfeed her new baby and for how long. Like any other lifestyle decision, this choice offers both incentives (benefits) and disincentives (costs). Economists argue that a new mother is more likely to choose to breastfeed if they feel there are more incentives than disincentives. How do these individual decisions translate to population-level breastfeeding prevalence? What is the magnitude of economic burden to society of sub-optimal breastfeeding? Is there enough evidence around population-level benefits of breastfeeding promotion? How can government actions be targeted to improve breastfeeding rates? In this session, Dr Pokhrel will attempt to answer these questions and also proposes a Return on Investment (ROI) method to help governments and other (healthcare) providers make a business case for breastfeeding promotion.