Operating a Nursing Mothers' Room in a University Setting: Thirteen Years of Experience

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Background

- Lack of private space for pumping breast milk is a barrier to achieving breastfeeding objectives outlined in Healthy People 2010.

- Providing a nursing mothers room (NMR) is one way to help women maintain the breastfeeding relationship while away from their infants.

- Data were collected from one of three NMRs that are available for students, staff and faculty in the Academic Health Center at the University of Minnesota.

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Background (cont.)

- In 1994 graduate student Joan Dodgson and faculty member Laura Duckett obtained grant support for the initial NMR set-up costs and a few initial operating expenses.

- Administrative documents were created, including an orientation data sheet, log book, use guidelines, breast milk pumping and storage information, and a directory of local breastfeeding resources.

- A faculty member, with the intermittent support of graduate students, is responsible for maintaining the room, orienting new NMR users, and handling any concerns.

Purpose of Presentation

1. To describe successful strategies used to operate a nursing mothers' room (NMR) in one university setting for 13 years.

2. Present room usage data for 2004, 2005, and 2006.

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NMR Features

- The NMR is arranged to provide adequate space and privacy for up to two women at any given time.

- A privacy curtain divides the two pumping areas.

- There is a door with a lock and each woman gets her own key.

NMR Features

- Two Medela Lactina electric breast pumps are available for the mothers' use.

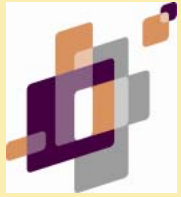- Some women use their own pump, usually the Medela Pump-N-Style

NMR Features

- Basic features are provided to allow for the safe collection and storage of pumped breast milk:
  - a sink for washing hands and pump parts,
  - hand soap,
  - paper towels,
  - a refrigerator, and
  - written materials about pumping and milk storage.
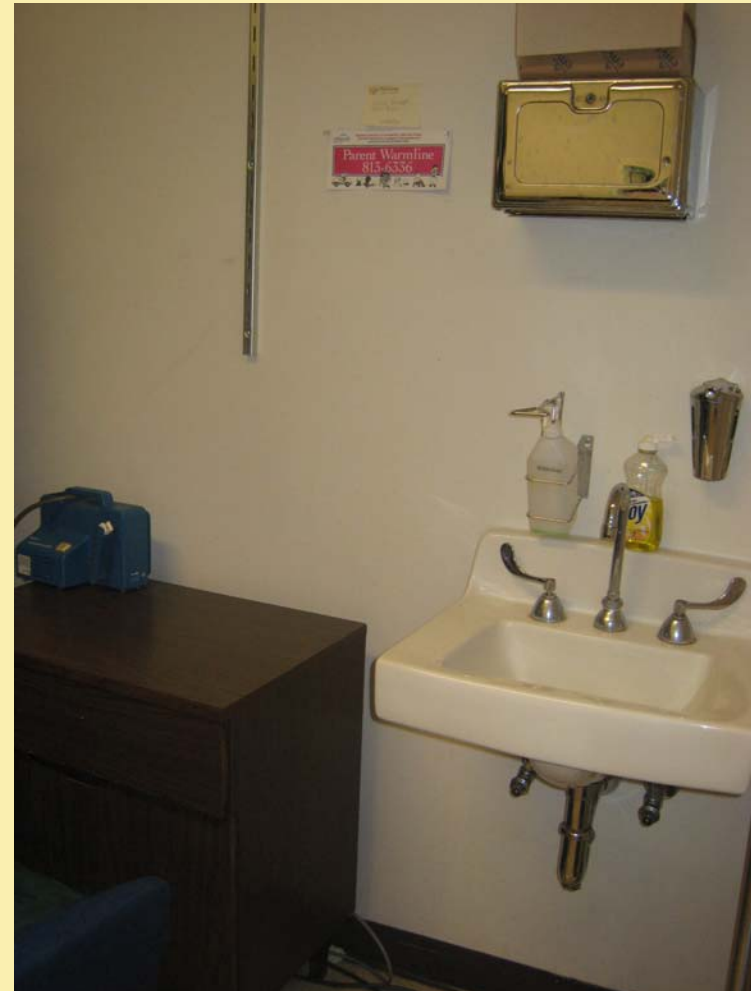
NMR Features

- Helping to compensate for crowded space, and begged, borrowed, and "reallocated" furniture are:
  - baby pictures,
  - breastfeeding posters,
  - mother-baby literature, and
  - a clock radio.
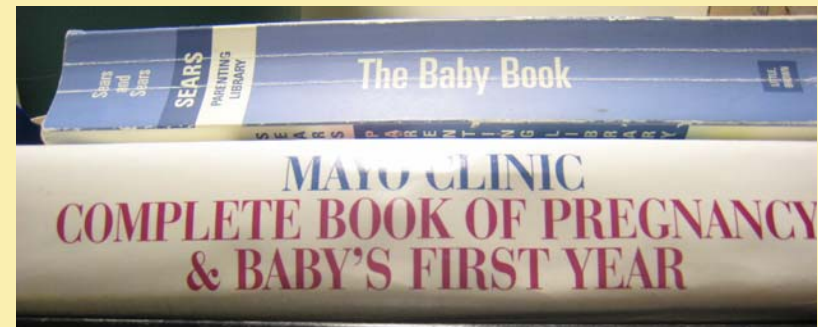
Study Site and Sample

- The NMR is located in the School of Nursing.

- NMR users are students, staff and faculty, mostly from the Academic Health Center.

Data Collection

- **Administrative data are routinely collected and used for evaluation purposes.**

- **Selected maternal and infant demographic information is collected during the orientation process.**

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NURSING MOTHERS ROOM
4-144 Weaver-Densford Hall

Participant Agreement

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ ZIP: _____

Campus Address: _____

Home Phone: _____   Campus Phone: _____

e-mail address(es): _____

University Department: _____

Staff _____   Student _____   Postdoctoral fellow _____   Faculty _____

What is your baby's birth date? _____   What is the gender of your baby? _____

Date Key signed out: _____

Date Key Returned: _____

Orientation Date: _____

Pump Attachments: _____

Received a copy of NMR Guidelines and discussed them with the staff: _____

I agree to return the key to the Nursing Mothers' Room as soon as I no longer need it. I will not lend it to anyone else. I will use the equipment according to the instructions provided and will abide by the NMR policies. I will report any problems with the equipment to Laura Duckett at ducke001@umn.edu or 612-624-9160 (office) or 651-329-2447 (cell).

_____
(Participant's signature)

Last reviewed and updated July 9, 2007 by Laura Duckett, PhD, MPH, RN, Associate Professor

Data Collection

- Room usage data are collected in a logbook.
- Mothers record the following each time they use the room:
  - name,
  - date, and
  - time in and out
- Mothers may write comments to each other or to us.
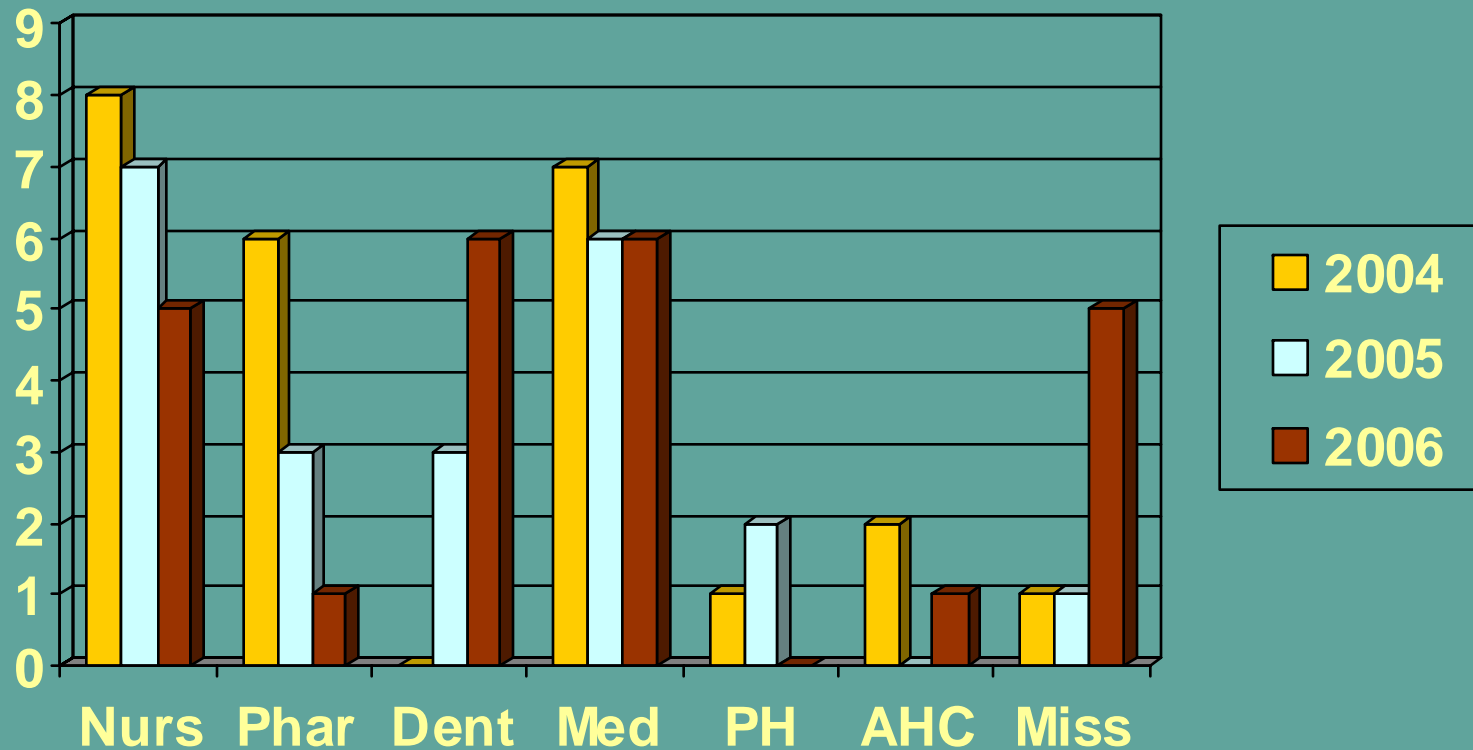
Maternal Characteristics

- Students included UG, graduate, & unspecified
- Staff included wide variety of non-faculty roles & research fellows

Maternal Characteristics

- Nurs = School of Nursing; Phar = College of Pharmacy; Dent = School of Dentistry; Med = Medical School; PH = School of Public Health; AHC = Academic Health Center Offices; Miss = Data Missing

Daily Usage Data
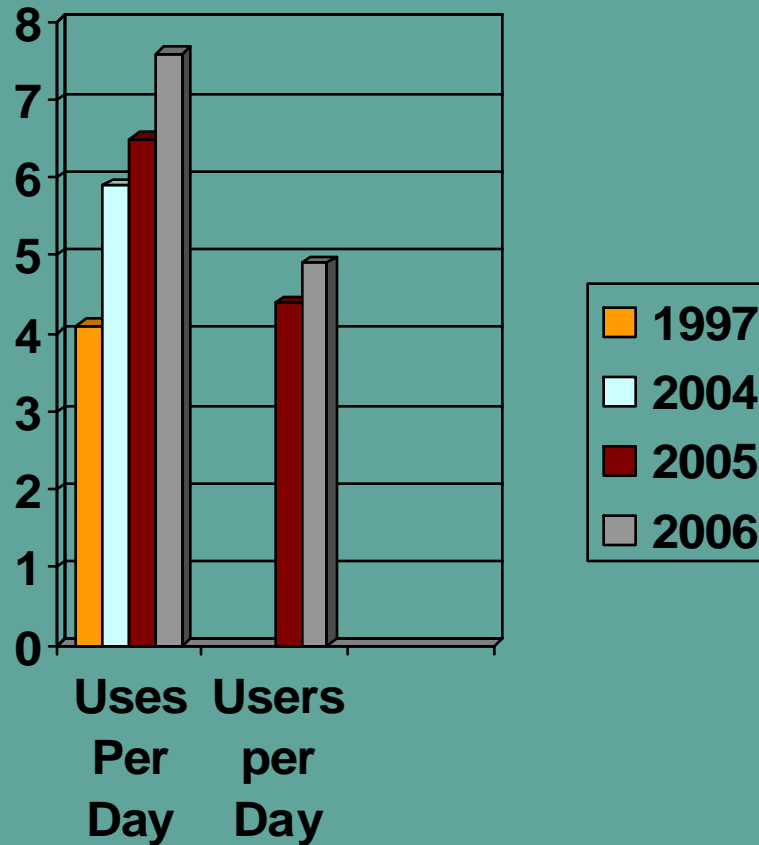
- Average Number of Uses per Day
  - 1997 – 4.1 (SD = 2.0)
  - 2004 – 5.9 (SD = 4.7)
  - 2005 – 6.5 (SD = 3.7)
  - 2006 – 7.6 (SD = 4.9)

- Average Number of Different Users per Day
  - 1997 – not analyzed
  - 2004 – not analyzed
  - 2005 – 4.4 (SD = 2.5)
  - 2006 – 4.9 (SD = 3.3)

Individual Uses

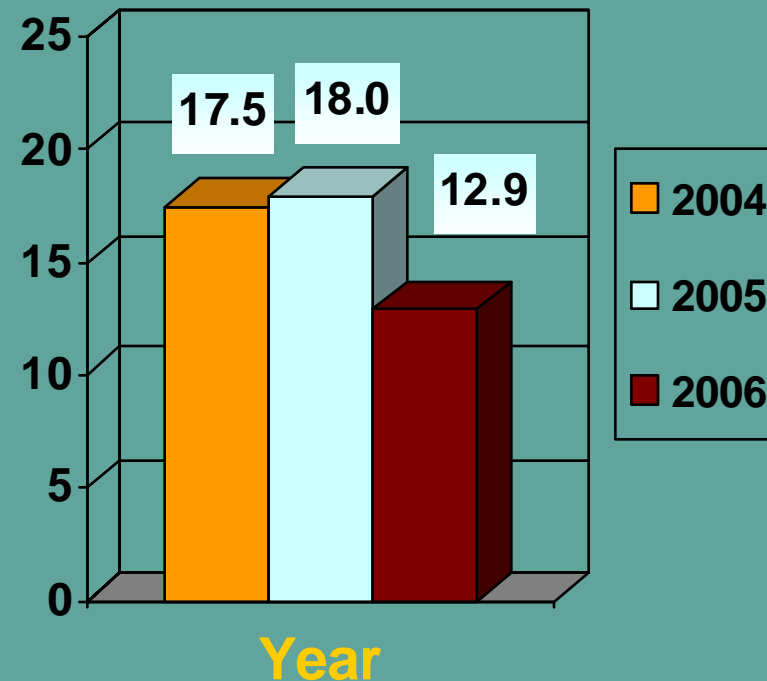- This slide illustrates the mean pumping time per visit to the NMR across all women.

- At first the value for 2006 did not seem plausible.

- Visual inspection of the data revealed several frequent NMR users who routinely pumped in 10 minutes or less.

Average Minutes Per Use

17.5 18.0 12.9

2004
2005
2006

Year

Individual Uses

This slide illustrates the number of days with each number of NMR uses (1 to 21) on weekdays (with 10 University holidays excluded) in 2005 and 2006.
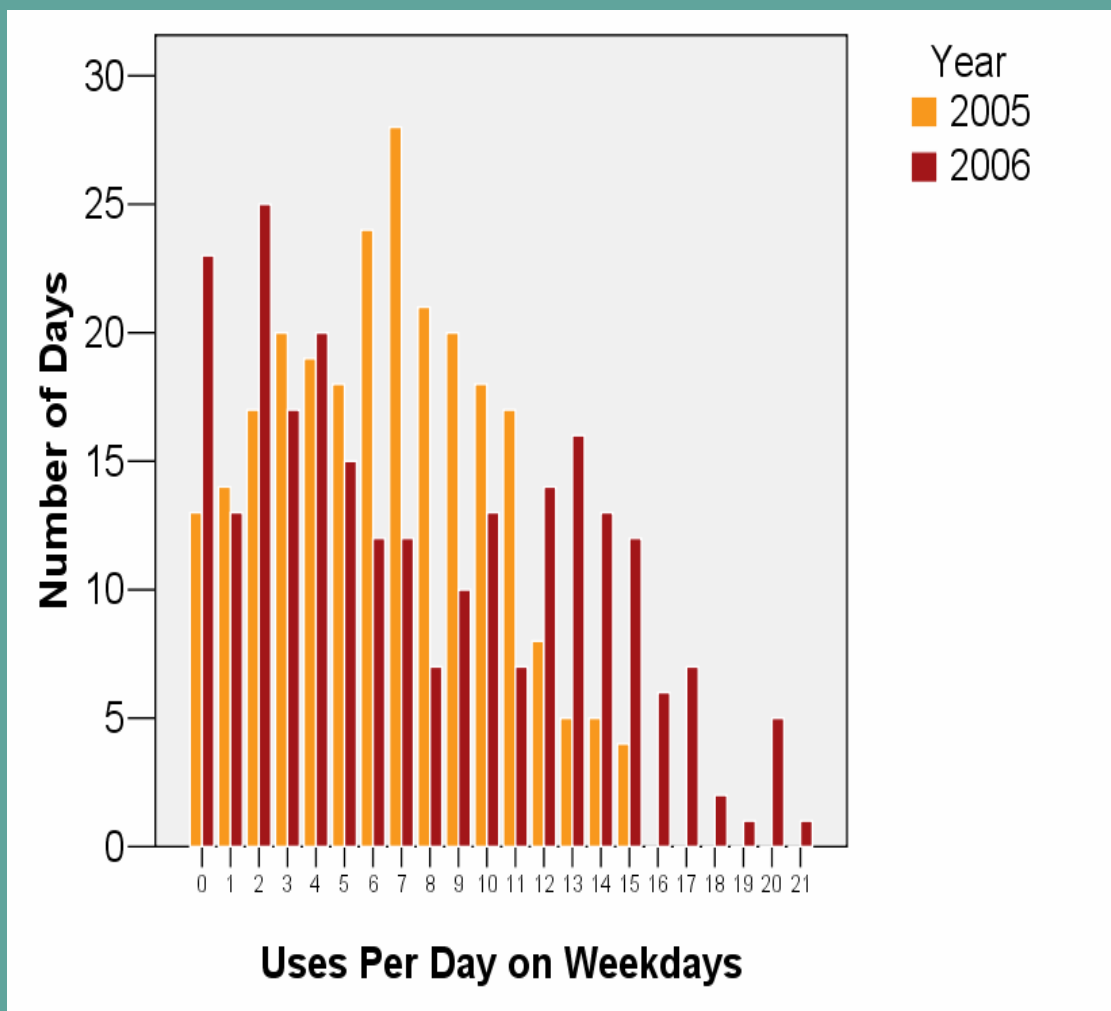
Annual Room Usage

Year	Number of Mothers Oriented	Number of Actual Users	Total Number of Uses	Total Annual Usage Hours
2004	25	Not Available	1283	374
2005	22	44	1620	485
2006	24	42	1907	410

Discussion

- From 2004-2006, this NMR has seen an increasing linear trend in uses in spite of the fact that total annual usage hours decreased from 2005 to 2006.
    - This indicates a continued and growing need for adequate space to pump breast milk.
    - It appears that women are using less time per pumping session, which may be related to using a high quality pump, nursing for longer durations, and becoming very experienced with pumping.

Discussion

- Our experiences and data illustrate that a NMR can be initiated and operated effectively and efficiently over time with a few key resources and a modest budget

- It is essential to successful NMR operation to have an individual who is knowledgeable about breastfeeding and willing to assume responsibility for the room, including:
    - Ability to commit 2 - 4 hours per month to NMR communications
    - Conduct user orientations
    - General oversight

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Acknowledgements

- Much credit is owed to:
  - The coauthors of this presentation, who are recent (Pam) and current (Nicolle) graduate students; without their hard work data would not have been extracted from the administrative records, organized, and analyzed so carefully.
  - Joan Dodgson, PhD, MPH, RN, Associate Professor, University of Hawaii for saying we really had to do this service project, helping to write the grants, working with Laura to create the processes, and doing a lot of the work for the initial evaluation.
  - Paulette Zachman, PhD, RN, Assistant Professor, College of Nursing, University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh for stepping in to fill Joan's shoes when Joan stepped out to begin her post PhD academic career.
  - Kitty Bell, BA, RNC, IBCLC, Staff Nurse, Boynton Health Service, University of Minnesota; Kitty helped us start the NMR in the School of Nursing and then went on to start another one at Boynton, which also serves the Academic Health Center.

Why a NMR?