

Academy of  
Breastfeeding Medicine



# Strategic Plan

2011 – 2015

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## Preface: The Nature and Purpose of this Plan

The following pages set forth the strategic priorities of the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine for the five years from 2011 through 2015, and the main activities by which they will be pursued. This plan should be understood as a list of *new challenges to be met* and *new activity or initiatives* that will be needed to meet them. It is not, and should not be read as, a list of all the most important aspects of the Academy or the most important work of its Board, Committees, and members. Many ABM activities — such as producing and publishing *Breastfeeding Medicine*, holding an annual International Conference, maintaining a useful website, offering the course ‘What Every Physician Needs to Know About Breastfeeding,’ and simply maintaining a fiscally sound, well managed, and accountable organization — are already cornerstones of the Academy’s work. They retain the high priority that has long been assigned to them. Because this plan contemplates no fundamental change in these activities, it does not elaborate on them, but incorporates them into the overarching goal with which the plan begins. This document describes the *next set of accomplishments to which ABM aspires*, not a departure from the many achievements it has already made and is committed to preserving.

The plan is based on responses to a strategic planning survey of the Academy’s Board members, Founders, and Committee chairs, conducted in the summer of 2010. The survey and plan were commissioned and overseen by the Strategic Planning Committee, and a preliminary outline of the plan was reviewed at the Board’s 2010 Annual Meeting. This final draft was submitted for the Board’s consideration and discussion in November 2010.



## Overarching Goal, 2011–2015

***to ensure that the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine is recognized as the premier physicians' organization in breastfeeding and human lactation worldwide.***

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In adopting this goal, we expressly emphasize three elements:

- the premier* — anyone seeking an authoritative voice on medical aspects of breastfeeding and human lactation should turn *first* to ABM.
- physicians'* — ABM is, and is committed to remaining, a professional organization of and for physicians.
- worldwide* — with this plan, we redouble our commitment to being the home for physicians interested in breastfeeding and human lactation in every country around the world.

All of the priorities listed below contribute to this fundamental goal. In addition, this goal calls for expanded marketing and public relations on behalf of ABM and its mission. It will require more deliberate effort at branding the Academy as the leading authority in its field and at elevating its voice in advocating for better physician education, health care, and public policy in support of breastfeeding worldwide.

## Priority 1

***Deepen ABM's identity as a global organization, with worldwide membership, leadership, activities, and relevance.***

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### Strategies:

Expand membership outside the United States.

- Increase membership in every category (see Priority 5).
- Place particular emphasis on increasing the percentage of members from developed countries outside the U.S., whose membership requires little or no subsidy.
- Pursue additional sources of subsidy, beyond U.S. dues, that can support significantly expanded membership from the developing world.



### Sponsor and co-sponsor more events outside the United States.

- Develop standard methods and procedures for holding regional conferences outside the U.S., and resolve outstanding legal and financial questions concerning them, so that such events do not pose undue risk or administrative strain to ABM.
- Gradually increase the number of regional conferences around the world, so that by 2015 there will be at least two such events every year.
- Increase attendance at such events, and circulate information about them to the whole ABM membership, via the website, through online social networks, and through the ABM listserv.
- Increase opportunities for non-U.S. physicians to participate in a session of 'What Every Physician Needs to Know About Breastfeeding,' either online or through more frequent live classes.

### Hold the annual ABM International Conference outside the U.S. at regular intervals.

- Hold at least one International Conference outside North America by 2015.
- Evaluate this Conference based on the size and nature of attendance, financial success, prestige of program, and development of new membership.
- Based on the results of the evaluation, determine an appropriate frequency for non-U.S. International Conferences thereafter.

### Expand connections with global organizations and institutions, including U.N. agencies and programs.

- Seek out relationships that can increase ABM's international profile and influence in discussions of medical practice and policy.
- Develop and maintain ABM's professional relationships with physician organizations, particularly international organizations.
- Place a priority on global relationships and partnerships that can lead to international fundraising opportunities and draw new membership and prestige to the Academy.
- Maintain ABM's ongoing relationships with selected international non-physician breastfeeding organizations, such as La Leche League International and the International Lactation Consultant Association, and strengthen its role as a core partner of the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action.

### Encourage more international leadership in ABM.

- By 2015, increase the number of non-U.S. members on the ABM Board by at least one.
- Recruit additional members from outside the U.S. to ABM committees.
- Develop additional opportunities, through regional conferences, networks, and other means, for non-U.S. members to exercise leadership on behalf of ABM in their countries and regions.
- Support and develop the role of Regional Network Coordinators in attracting more non-U.S. members into leadership positions.



## Priority 2

***Maintain — and where possible increase — the number, circulation, usefulness, international relevance, and rigor of ABM Protocols, including translation into more languages.***

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### Strategies:

Direct additional resources toward production and translation of Protocols.

- Place a priority on fundraising that can support Protocol production and translation.
- In assigning currently available resources, elevate the priority of Protocols.
- Recruit additional members to work on the Protocol Committee and to assist in the production and translation process.

Develop more and better data on where ABM Protocols are circulated and how they are used.

- Complete a tracking system for Protocol use, including those accessed or downloaded from the website and requests to reprint or publicize Protocols, as well as related donations.
- Identify resources for expanded data collection on Protocol use.
- Explore opportunities for a survey or other market research on how and where Protocols are used.
- Develop a survey or other means to solicit information from known users of the Protocols, to determine user satisfaction, interests, and concerns.

Expand promotion & marketing of Protocols to the extent resources permit.

- Train and encourage members to promote use of ABM Protocols through regional conferences, the website, online social networks, and professional gatherings outside ABM.
- Seek funding specifically for promotion and distribution of the Protocols.

In development of new Protocols, place highest priority on evidence-based practice of worldwide interest.



### Priority 3

#### ***Develop a process to certify physicians as Breastfeeding Medicine experts or specialists.***

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##### **Strategies:**

Identify experienced medical testing/certification consultants to guide the exam-development process.

By the end of 2011, identify likely costs and possible funding sources for developing a Board exam.

Complete exam content by 2013.

Pilot-test the exam by 2015.

### Priority 4

#### ***Diversify the Academy's sources of funding and increase total income.***

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##### **Strategies:**

Organize staff responsibilities so as to set a priority on fund development.

- Identify development as a top priority of the executive director and staff.
- Adjust other responsibilities as necessary to ensure adequate time and resources for development priorities.

Create and maintain an overall, up-to-date Development Plan.

- An initial plan, setting priorities and specifying resources and responsibilities, should be completed by the 2011 annual meeting.
- The plan should include specific priorities for:
  - international agencies and funders,
  - institutional philanthropy,
  - government, and
  - individual donors.
- The Board should be encouraged, at least annually, to recommend possible funding priorities, opportunities, and partnerships to be incorporated into the plan.
- Annual updates should include an assessment of the past year's performance, and should recommend any changes in roles, resources, or responsibilities that may be required to meet upcoming objectives.



## Priority 5

***Increase membership in the Academy, broaden the diversity of the membership, and reinforce and increase the value of being a member.***

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### Strategies:

The Membership Committee should develop a Membership Recruitment Plan ready for Board consideration by the July 2011 Board meeting.

The Recruitment Plan should begin by clarifying the basic rationale for membership — that is, the fundamental reasons why physicians who are not yet members of the Academy will want to join, take an active role, and recruit other members.

The Recruitment Plan should set forth specific strategies for recruiting:

- Members of medical specialties beyond pediatrics;
- Medical students, interns, and young physicians;
- New members outside the United States (see Priority 1);
- Members of racial and ethnic minority groups within the United States;
- Male physicians.

In the Recruitment Plan or separately, the Board should develop a plan to widen opportunities for member involvement and leadership in the Academy, so as to make membership more attractive and meaningful. Increased member involvement should be sought in:

- Education;
- Regional conferences and other events;
- Solicitation of new members and individual member donations;
- Participation in the listserv and online networks;
- Contribution of technical or professional expertise, such as legal, financial-management, IT, marketing, or communications.

These plans should include use of the website and online networks to publicize specific needs and opportunities for volunteer activity and leadership on behalf of ABM.

The plans should provide for increasing the quality and number of resources available on the Members Only channel of the website.



## Priority 6

### *Ensure more effective governance and management.*

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#### **Strategies:**

Establish a clear and consistent delineation between the Board's primary role in governance and organizational policy, and the staff's primary role in management and implementation.

Develop written understandings of what is expected from Board and staff members, including:

- the duties and responsibilities of officers, Board members, and committee chairs and members;
- the roles and responsibilities of staff members, including the time and resources available to discharge their responsibilities;
- the proper division of responsibilities between Board and staff, including how communication between Board and staff members should flow.

Establish regular training sessions on Board-management roles and responsibilities, including information on:

- the ABM By-Laws,
- the legal and fiduciary responsibilities of the Board,
- the elements of responsible and effective stewardship by Board members,
- the activities and responsibilities of ABM committees,
- the division of responsibilities between Board and staff.

Expand opportunities for members outside the Board and committees to become more deeply involved in ABM (see Priority 5).

Use the nominations process to draw further expertise into ABM leadership positions, to ensure that the most qualified, most distinguished members are nominated for Board and Committee service and that members with specific forms of expertise — including financial management, IT, marketing, communications, and law — are recruited to appropriate positions of leadership.

The Board should review these priorities in leadership development at least annually. The review should include the diversity of ABM's leadership by race, gender, nationality, and specialty (see Priorities 1 and 5).