LactaMap: A novel approach to lactation care

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Background

Doctors report insufficient training for the skills expected of them when treating patients with lactation difficulties.1,2,3

Aim

To develop an evidence-informed online lactation care support system for use by doctors during medical consultations.

Methods

- A multidisciplinary expert group met weekly to conceptualise content and scope (Table 1).
- The need for an evidence-informed description of normal lactation function was identified.
- From this, a decision tree care pathway was constructed to guide practitioners to conditions identified as potential causes of abnormality.
- A literature search using relevant search terms and criteria was completed for each condition.
- Clinical practice guidelines were developed for each condition by group consensus, using the literature search results.
- An expert, senior researcher moderated when required.
- Content was uploaded to a custom-designed website (Fig. 1).

Results

- The normal function description identified 4 domains for consideration when screening for lactation dysfunction: pain, milk transfer, infant health and maternal health (Fig. 1).
- Evidence-informed guidelines for 112 conditions affecting lactation were developed and grouped under the domains in an overarching care pathway (Fig. 2).
- Literature searches highlighted varying terminology and definitions.
- LactaPedia, a glossary of 564 lactation terms was developed to standardise language (Fig. 3).

Discussion

- The first phase of conceptual and content development of LactaMap took 10 years to complete. The next phase, including continued piloting with doctors and ongoing content update and review is underway.
- LactaPedia launched in August 2018.
- Subsequent versions of LactaMap for other health professionals and families are planned.

Table 1. The multidisciplinary expert group.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Melinda Boss</td>
<td>Pharmacist, researcher</td>
<td>Project lead, content development</td>
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<td>Cathy Garbin</td>
<td>Child health nurse, lactation consultant, midwife</td>
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<td>Hazel Gardner</td>
<td>Nutritionist, researcher</td>
<td>Content development</td>
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<td>Vanessa Sakalidis</td>
<td>Physiologist, researcher</td>
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<td>Jane Deacon</td>
<td>Medical practitioner</td>
<td>Content development and review</td>
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<td>Mariie Rowan</td>
<td>Medical practitioner</td>
<td>Content development and review</td>
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<td>Lynda Chadeck</td>
<td>Paediatrician</td>
<td>Content review</td>
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<td>Douglas Pritchard</td>
<td>Medical practitioner, researcher</td>
<td>Pilot testing, content development</td>
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<td>Donna Geddes</td>
<td>Senior research fellow</td>
<td>Content review, expert senior</td>
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<td>Peter Hartmann</td>
<td>Emeritus professor</td>
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References