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PRESS RELEASE

MOHW Commemorates World Breastfeeding Week

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The Ministry of Health & Wellness joins the international community this week to celebrate World Breastfeeding Week from August 1 to 7.

This year's theme is "Protect Breastfeeding: A Shared Responsibility." It is a call on all to protect a mother and baby's right to breastfeeding and to view it as a shared responsibility among the health system, the community, the workplace and the home.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness will be conducting key activities such as educational sessions at hospitals, social media campaigns, production of an advertisement and the certification of two polyclinics as Mother and Baby Friendly. Additionally, in collaboration with its partners (UNICEF, INCAP, PAHO and Bottom Dalla), the Nutrition Unit will be carrying out activities during the entire month of August to highlight the importance of breastfeeding. These collaborations will help to meet this year's campaign objective which include:

1. To **inform** people about the importance of protecting breast feeding;
2. To **anchor** breastfeeding support as an important public health responsibility;
3. To **engage** with individuals and organizations for greater impact; and
4. To **galvanize** action on protecting breastfeeding in order to improve public health.

Breastfeeding is the best nutrition for babies. The ministry continues to encourage exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life with its continuation for up to two years. Breastfeeding provides numerous benefits for both baby and mother. For babies, it provides all the necessary nutrients to their growth and development, as well as development of a great immune response to prevent babies from getting sick. For mothers, it protects them

from cancer, reduces the risk of post-partum depression, and it promotes loss of baby weight.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness thanks all its partners for their continued support. Additionally, the public is advised that the COVID-19 vaccine has been approved safe for all pregnant and breastfeeding women. All persons 18 years and older are encouraged to get vaccinated.

Ends

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