



Competency Statements

The following competency statements identify and summarize the special knowledge and skills included in the role of an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC), Registered Lactation Consultant (RLC). A more detailed description of the role of a lactation consultant is provided in *Standards of Practice for Lactation Consultants*, published by the International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA), www.ilca.org.

The International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, Registered Lactation Consultant will:

1. Possess the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to provide competent comprehensive consultation and education in routine and special circumstance lactation, from preconception to beyond twelve months.
2. Integrate additional knowledge from the following disciplines in providing care for breastfeeding families: Maternal and Infant Anatomy; Physiology and Endocrinology; Nutrition and Biochemistry; Immunology and Infectious Disease; Pathology; Pharmacology and Toxicology; Psychology, Sociology, and Anthropology; Growth Parameters and Developmental Milestones; Interpretation of Research; Ethical and Legal Issues; Breastfeeding Equipment and Technology; Techniques; and Public Health.
3. Utilize knowledge of personality, counseling skills, and family and group theory when providing breastfeeding support.
4. Integrate cultural, psychosocial, nutritional, and pharmacological aspects of breastfeeding into lactation consultant practice.
5. Utilize appropriate communication skills in interactions with clients and health care providers.
6. Maintain a collaborative, supportive relationship with clients, emphasizing individualized family care, client autonomy, informed decision making, and optimal health care.
7. Act as an advocate for breastfeeding in the community, workplace, and within the health care professions.
8. Utilize adult learning principles when providing educational experiences for clients, health care providers, and the community.
9. Interpret current research findings to determine appropriateness for application to practice.
10. Function and contribute as a member of the health care team, provide follow-up plans, and make appropriate referrals to other health care providers and community support resources.
11. Maintain comprehensive client records.
12. Follow a professional Code of Ethics, local laws and codes, and maintain appropriate standards of hygiene.
13. Observe the guidelines for health workers outlined in the WHO International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes.
14. Maintain and enhance knowledge and skills with appropriate and regular continuing education.