New mothers are recommended to exclusively breastfeed their infants for the first six months to provide optimal health for infant and mother. However, only 13.0% of mothers in Mississippi reached this milestone, which was far below the Healthy People 2020 objective of 25.5%. One factor that impacts breastfeeding success is access to certified lactation consultants, but many low-income women lack access. The use of “telelactation” programs, which provide access to lactation consultants via video conferencing on internet connected devices, has been suggested as a potential solution to overcome these barriers. This prompted the Mississippi WIC Program to provide participants with free access to the Pacify “telelactation” application, which provides 24-hour access to video conferencing sessions with International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC) via smartphones.

A retrospective cohort study was conducted to evaluate breastfeeding duration and exclusivity among women downloading the application compared to women not utilizing the application. Data were analyzed with logistic regression to compare rates of any or exclusive breastfeeding at three and six months between groups. A total of 10,912 women were included in the study, of which 819 (7%) downloaded the Pacify application. Women downloading the Pacify application had significantly higher rates of any breastfeeding at three months (OR 1.74, CI 1.50-2.03) and six months (OR 2.01, CI 1.71-2.36) and exclusive breastfeeding at three months (OR 2.47, CI 2.09-2.92) and six months (OR 2.06, CI 1.64-2.59) even after controlling for confounding demographic factors. The number of times the Pacify application was used was not significantly associated with any (p=0.14) or exclusive (p=.049) breastfeeding at six months. This study demonstrated a positive association between downloading the Pacify application and breastfeeding duration and exclusivity.

Date: Thursday, November 15th, 2018
Time: 11:00 a.m.
Location: BHS 131

Faculty, students, and the general public are invited.

Committee In Charge:
Dr. Jennifer Pharr, Advisory Committee Chair
Dr. Mark Buttner, Advisory Committee Member
Dr. Timothy Bungum, Advisory Committee Member
Dr. Catherine Dingley, Graduate College Representative