Breastfeeding rates from 1999-2005 show that approximately half of all mothers were still breastfeeding their infants at 6 months of age, and or less than one-third at 12 months. (Figure 1).

Although breastfeeding rates for LA County overall meet or exceed Healthy People 2010 goals, there are large racial and ethnic disparities. (Figure 2).

Breastfeeding initiation rates from 1999 to 2005 show that White and Latina mothers continue to meet Healthy People 2010 goals, while Asian/Pacific Islander and African-American mothers have only recently met that goal. (Figure 2).

In 2005, Latinas born outside the United States were more likely to initiate breastfeeding and continue breastfeeding at 6 and 12 months compared to U.S. born Latinas (42%) (Figure 4).

Among women who initiated breastfeeding, the most common reasons reported for stopping 6 months or earlier were: child had difficulty nursing, thinking their breastmilk alone did not satisfy child and feeling they didn’t have enough milk (Table 1).

DISCUSSION

PUBLIC HEALTH AND BUREAU OF HEALTH ASSESSMENT 

Breastfeeding trends were examined using three surveys of the Los Angeles County (LACHS) population: 1999, 2002, and 2005. The results of each LACHS are projectable countywide, within the County’s 26 health districts and its 8 service planning areas (SPAs).

Methods

The overall objectives of each survey is to update key health status indicators, health-related behaviors, health insurance coverage and access to health care among adults and children living in Los Angeles County. Each LACHS is structured to include both the Adult and Child survey components.

Respondents were randomly selected per household by telephone using an unrestricted random digit dial sampling methodology inclusive of all eligible telephone households in Los Angeles County.

Interviews were offered in six languages (English, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean and Vietnamese).

The results of each LACHS are projectable countywide, within the County’s 26 health districts and its 8 service planning areas (SPAs) (Figure 1).

A sample of 6,032 interviews was completed among parents/caregivers of children 17 years or younger for the Child survey in 2005, a sample of 5,995 interviews for 2002 Child survey and 6,016 interviews for 1999 Child survey.

Questions about breastfeeding practices and reasons for following these practices were administered to mothers/caregivers whose randomly selected child was 0-5 years of age.

The analysis was limited to women who initiated breastfeeding at birth. The breastfeeding response rates should be viewed with caution (Table 1).

Telephone surveys are subject to coverage bias from non-inclusion of households without telephones. To reduce this potential source of bias, respondents were asked if they had been without telephone service at any time in the past 12 months, and the data were weighted accordingly.

REFERENCE

Hospital Breastfeeding Report, University of California at Davis Human Lactation Center and California WIC Association, August 2006.