The University of Vermont

Staff Council

Serving as a voice and advocate for all staff at UVM, since 1971.

May 7, 2013

To: Barbara Johnson, Associate Vice President of Human Resource Services

From: Staff Council Compensation, Benefits and Budget Committee
Catherine Symans, Staff Council President
Renee Berteau, Staff Council Vice President

Re: Nursing Mother Facilities Recommendation

As Staff Council’s Compensation, Benefits and Budget Committee, we are responsible for monitoring and reviewing all matters that deal with non-represented staff compensation as they relate to conditions of employment, including changes, additions, or deletions to benefits. In light of this charge and our previous support of the University Benefits Advisory Council’s efforts regarding Child Care and Parental Leave, a workgroup within the committee made up of Naima Dennis, Marilyn Eldred, Lynn Tracy, and Debbie Stern investigated concerns about the accessibility and appropriateness of Nursing Mother Facilities at UVM. This investigation resulted from concerns raised from staff members about the designated facility in the Waterman Building. The Presidential Commission on the Status of Women and the Women’s Center have previously worked on this issue and are encouraged by the efforts Staff Council has made to address these new concerns. This recommendation is a result of efforts over the last academic year to work collaboratively with Human Resource Services to resolve these concerns and address similar issues throughout the University.

Background: Throughout the United States, universities have recognized the need to provide lactation rooms across their campuses. In 2009, HRS introduced the UVM policy on Nursing Mothers in the Workplace (www.uvm.edu/policies/hr/nursingmothers.pdf) and was instrumental in creating Nursing Mother Facilities to serve as lactation rooms on campus. In addition, nursing mothers are protected under Vermont Law (Vermont H.641: An Act Relating to Nursing Mothers in the Workplace).

Context: UVM is recognized as a breastfeeding friendly employer by the Vermont Department of Health, currently holding the silver standard for lactation rooms.

Current lactation room locations include:

- Delehantry Hall – Trinity Campus
- Davis Center
- Given Building
- Ira Allen Chapel
- Waterman Building
**Problem:** Based on a 2012 effort by Human Resource Services to assess these rooms, the lactation room in Waterman, while adhering to state standards, has garnered attention as being in need of an upgrade.

**Recommendations:** We recommend an upgrade to the Waterman facility as described below to provide a cost efficient and private space where lactating mothers are welcome to pump or nurse. We also recommend further outreach and education to our University community and visitors while encouraging the expansion and designation of rooms throughout UVM that can be used for the purpose of pumping or nursing.

**Proposal:** We propose the following actions on a six month trial basis:

1) Utilize the Faculty/Staff Lounge Room 209 on the second floor of Waterman for lactation purposes. The room is immediately ready for use, but we recommend the following:
   a. Identify who currently uses the space and gain their feedback about the room having a dual purpose.
   b. Remove the “do not lock” sticker that is on the door.
   c. Identify an office that will have a key to the room to open the door in the event that it becomes locked during normal business hours.
   d. Create a hanging tag that can be used to notify others that the room is in use for lactation purposes.
   e. Clean and remove extra lamps and miscellaneous clutter (not an immediate necessity).

2) Keep the fourth floor Women’s restroom lactation cubicle “as is” as a backup lactation room if the lounge room is in use.

3) Include breastfeeding informational brochures at the annual UVM Benefits Expo to increase University awareness and communicate at least on a quarterly basis about the lactation rooms while referring our community to the Human Resource Services website for additional information.

4) Encourage UVM department heads, on an informal basis, to provide suitable spaces for Nursing Mothers in buildings where there is not a designated room. These spaces would, at minimum, include a quiet, lockable room, comfortable chair, table, an electrical outlet and a hanging tag to be used to notify others that the room is in use.

As our University website maintains, “UVM is proud to support breastfeeding in the workplace” ([www.uvm.edu/hrs/?Page=healthy/nursingmothers.html](http://www.uvm.edu/hrs/?Page=healthy/nursingmothers.html)) and in order to support this effort we need to continue to find cost effective ways to address the needs of nursing mothers throughout the institution.

cc: Tom Sullivan, President  
Bob Low, Interim Provost and Senior Vice President  
Richard Cate, Vice President for Finance and Administration  
Gary Derr, Vice President for Executive Operations and Chief of Staff  
Wanda Heading-Grant, Chief Diversity Officer  
Fayneese Miller, Chair, Presidential Commission on the Status of Women  
LuAnn Rolley, Director, Women’s Center