

Sue Cox IBCLC

Following the successful submission to the Royal Hobart Hospital for the creation of a position to assist mothers with breastfeeding and to educate families and staff about breastfeeding, I began work as the 'Breastfeeding Sister' ("...nobody would know what lactation meant...") in February 1978. At that time I knew of nobody else who worked in that field so it was not until 1985 that I found out how many people around the world who like me were also working in isolation. In 1985 I was the representative for the Australian Breastfeeding Association (then known as the Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia) to the first meeting of the IBLCE board. It was at this meeting that we decided on the title for those credentialed by the board would be lactation consultants (IBCLCs). With assistance from a Panel of Experts in lactation from around the world, the board developed the first exam based on the skills and knowledge set out by the Panel of Experts. In the past 25 years the profession has grown strongly globally. I have been very fortunate to have been involved in the development of the profession and in meeting many wonderful IBCLCs and lactation researchers but the main thing the profession has allowed me to do is to expand my knowledge so that I am able to assist women with previously unrecognised conditions and breastfeeding difficulties. My other pleasure is in the number of special women and men I have come in contact with in this 25 year journey. Thank you all for joining our vital profession and for teaching me so much about breastfeeding and life along the way.