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Hyderabad: In a move to strengthen its mother and newborn healthcare facilities, the Fernandez Hospital has inaugurated its third human milk bank at its Bogulkunta in-patient facility. The hospital, which launched its first milk bank in 2007, receives approximately 1000 litres of expressed milk annually, which helps over 500 neonates in the NICU, a press release said.

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CEO, Fernandez Foundation, Dr G Pramod, said the milk bank services are offered free of cost at all the units. "we are committed to breastfeeding and ensure that every newborn is on mother's milk. We firmly believe that every Neonatal Intensive Care Unit should be equipped with human milk banking facility," he said.

Head, Neonatology, Fernandez Hospitals, Dr Tejo Pratap said that some mothers face challenges in establishing and maintaining adequate supply of milk. "Our quality improvement initiative studies have shown that comprehensive breastfeeding care services including educating mothers, supporting them to express milk, and facilitating mother-infant interaction through Kangaroo Mother Care and other family-centred care initiatives, help improve and sustain milk output".

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Human milk banks at Fernandez receive milk from donor mothers with excessive milk production after meeting the needs of their own babies and having undergone careful screening for underlying health conditions. Expressed milk is then refrigerated in special containers. This milk is then pasteurized, screened for infections, and stored in a deep freezer. When the need arises, the frozen milk is thawed and fed to a newborn.

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