

Comparing Swedish child health nurses' attitudes toward fathers in 2014 and 2017

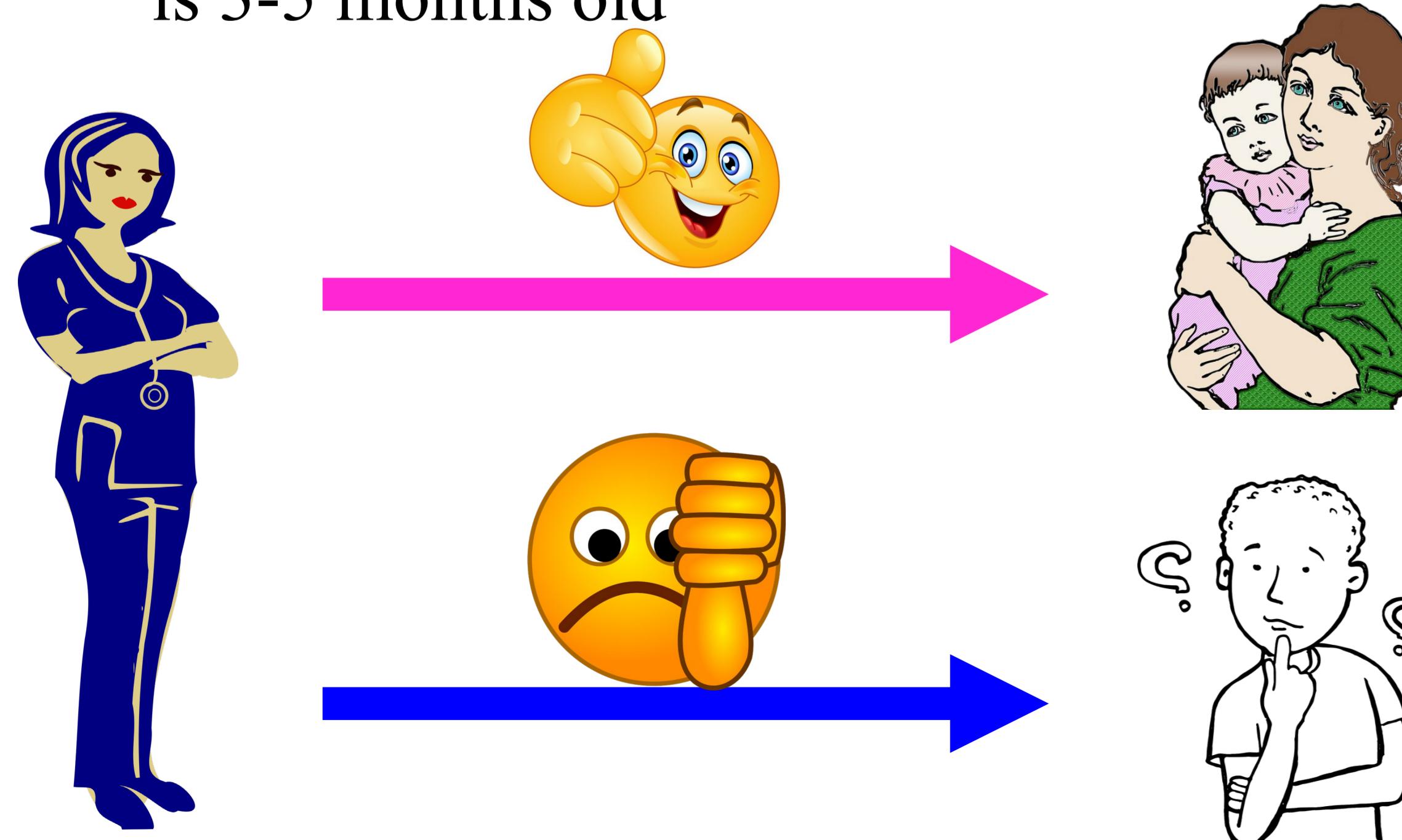
Abstract: Swedish nurses are slowly changing to accept and support fathers. An organizational change was made in 2017 to have a specific father visit. Nurses completed an 11-item questionnaire in 2014 and in 2017. Nurses view fathers of infants more equally in 2017 than 2014. However, half of the nurses do not feel competent in supporting fathers. While nurses need more support to include fathers, their attitudes are changing.

AIM

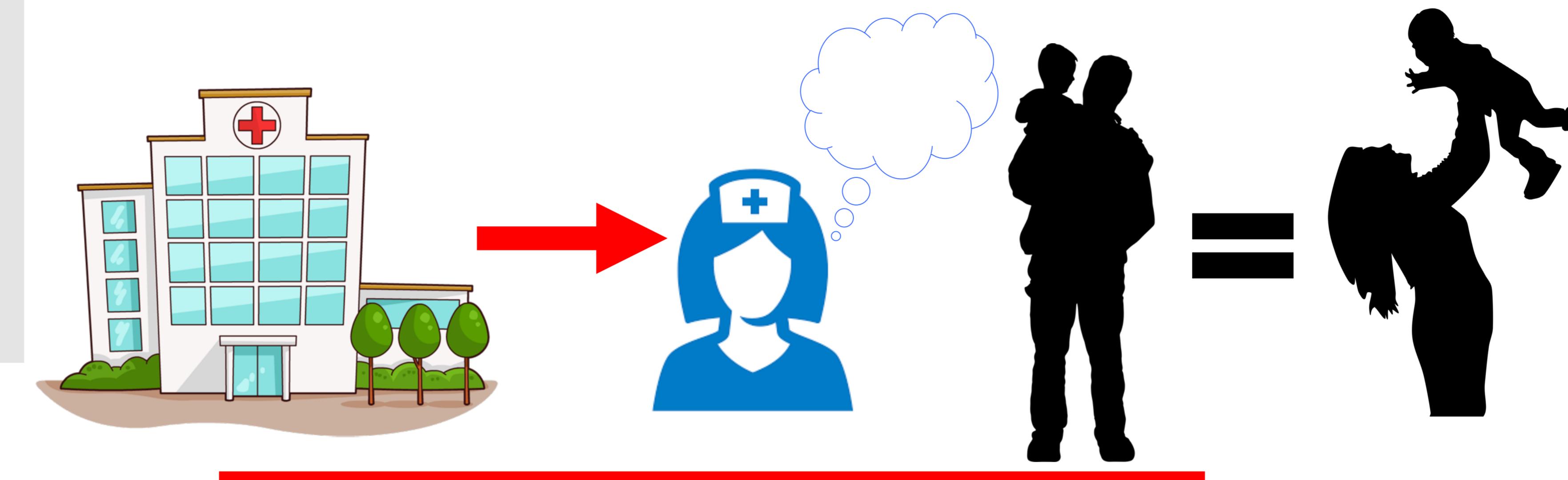
To assess if Stockholm County nurses' attitudes toward fathers changed when implementing a new clinical visit for fathers

Introduction

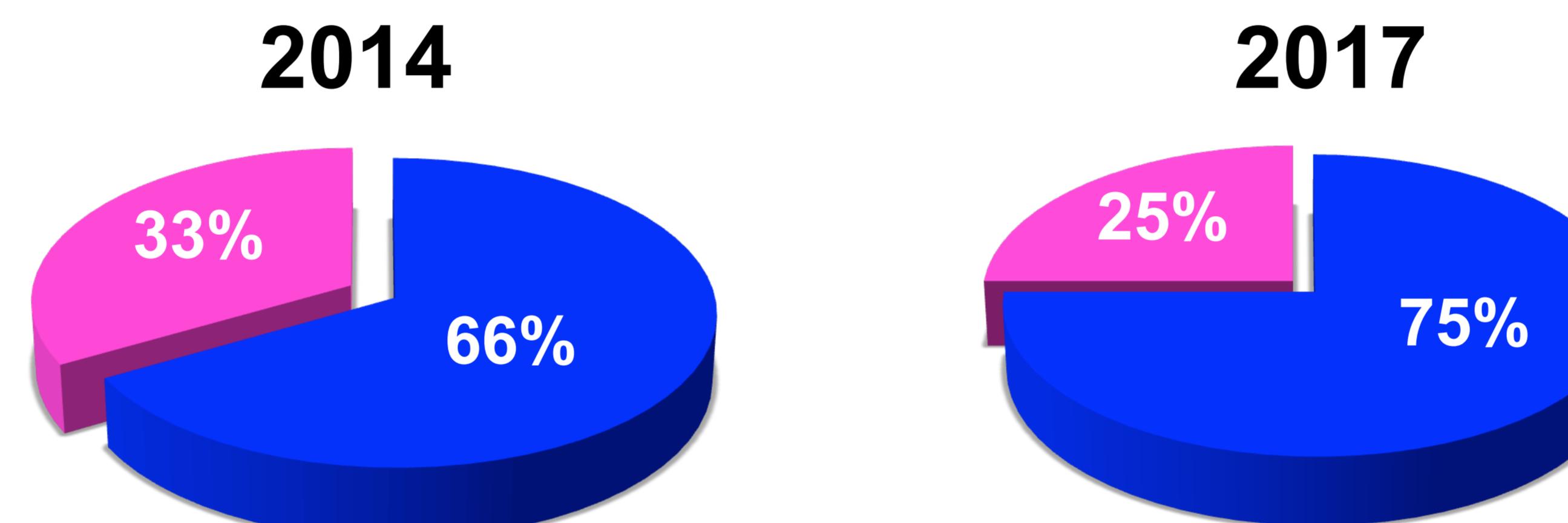
- ❖ Fathers should be seen as equal parents and receive parenting support
- ❖ 1/3-1/2 of Swedish fathers don't feel supported by child health professionals
- ❖ In 2004, 2/3rds of nurses did not view fathers of infants as equal parents to mothers
 - ❖ In 2014, this number fell to 1/3 of nurses
 - ❖ However, mothers are still nurses' priority
- ❖ To develop better nurse-father relationships, a new clinical visit is offered to fathers when their infant is 3-5 months old



Making **organizational** changes to include fathers can change nurses' attitudes toward fathers



Results



- 2017: “**Mothers** are not instinctively better at caring than **fathers**” ($p < 0.05$)
- 2017: “**Fathers** are as sensitive to infants' needs as **mothers**” ($p < 0.01$)
- 2017: “With the exception of breastfeeding, there is no difference between **mothers'** and **fathers'** ability to relate and care for their infants” ($p < 0.01$)



Michael Wells, Postdoc
Department of Public Health
Karolinska Institutet

E-mail: michael.wells@ki.se



**Karolinska
Institutet**

- ## 2017 Results
- 92% want to establish contact with both parents
 - 54% think they have the same competence to support mothers and fathers
 - 28% think they have the same competence to support mothers and fathers with mental ill-health
 - 81% think it is at least somewhat complicated to support both parents of the same family

Methods

- 317 nurses participated in a half-day training to implement a new father visit
- 273 nurses completed a baseline questionnaire on their attitudes towards fathers of infants
- Comparing 2017 with 2014 nurses, the 2017 nurses were more likely to be:
 - Younger
 - Less experienced
 - Pediatric Nurses
- So, Propensity Score Matching was used for data analysis