

NENC Breastfeeding Strategy

Encouraging and supporting breastfeeding is recognised as an important public health activity. There is good evidence demonstrating the short and long term health benefits of breastfeeding for both mothers and infants. To breastfeed successfully, mothers require accurate evidence-based information, face-to-face ongoing predictable support across all public services, as well as social support in their local community. Utilising the regional breastfeeding in maternity services audit and key evidence including NICE guidance to deliver on key recommendations across the systems in partnership with Women, families, communities, Maternity, 0-19 years services, Local Authorities, Education, PHE, NHSE.



As there is clear evidence that timely, proactive, one to one, face-to-face contact in the early postnatal weeks increases breastfeeding rates, a clear pathway of antenatal and postnatal touchpoints should be offered to all women and families with additional support to women where breastfeeding is not their cultural norm. The importance of care and communication between staff disciplines underpins the success of this strategy. Improve consistency of seamless support, information and resources to NE breastfeeding mothers underpinned by UNICEF guidance. Where available, local provision of 24 hour breastfeeding support through a video link service to an appropriately trained professional should be available and online secure peer support.



Create a wider environment that is supportive of breastfeeding. Improve the support of working mothers in the work place through employer letter and encouragement of sign up to Better Health at Work awards scheme. Provision of breastfeeding promotion material should be made available to community areas to positively reinforce any breastfeeding seen in community settings. Resources such as Baby Buddy App, Public Health England Start for Life resources and UNICEF videos should be promoted. Support key agencies that are in mandated contact with young children, teenage children and the 40-60 year old age bracket to inform and educate about population health benefits of breastfeeding.



Led by designated Infant Feeding Leads, all Maternity, Health Visiting services, Neonatal Units and Universities to work towards achieving or maintaining UNICEF Baby Friendly accreditation level 3 to standardise training and advice. It is notable that this is a new form accreditation for most of the North East's Neonatal Units. Those agencies working regularly with breastfeeding women and young children such as nurseries, childminders, family support workers and Children Centre staff are encouraged to achieve UNICEF accreditation. This should include provision for Foster Carers education to ensure babies in the Looked After System receive breastmilk where appropriate. Local Authority public health teams should develop local breastfeeding strategies jointly with local partners that include the education of all staff, prioritizing public facing employees such as those working in libraries, sports and leisure services.



Monitor and support UNICEF accreditation in Maternity, Neonatal, Health Visiting and Children Centre's. Regularly review attitudes of staff and hard to reach communities towards breastfeeding alongside breastfeeding rates at 48 hours, 5 days, 10-14 days, 6 months, 1 and 2 years of age. Regularly update commissioners and all agencies contributing to service delivery.