



KNOWSLEY BREASTFEEDING STRATEGY

2025-2030



Knowsley Council



KNOWSLEY
START FOR LIFE
AND BEYOND

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FOREWORDS

As Chair of Knowsley's Health and Wellbeing Board I am delighted to introduce the new Breastfeeding Strategy 2025-30 for our borough. The Strategy is extremely welcome, and it will support the Health and Wellbeing Board's vision to work better together for a healthier, happier Knowsley.

Breastfeeding helps to give babies the best start in life, with overwhelming evidence that it also plays a critical role in narrowing health inequalities within communities. As the strategy clearly conveys breastfeeding delivers so many benefits to both mother and baby. However, whilst breastfeeding is a natural process, many mothers know from experience it's not always easy. Mothers need support – both to get started and to sustain breastfeeding.

I'm extremely pleased that this strategy considers breastfeeding as a public health issue and sets out a strategic direction and vision where everyone works together to support

Knowsley to be a breastfeeding friendly Borough. We need all our communities to be well informed and supportive of breastfeeding. Whilst a lot of support is available to new mothers in Knowsley, there is still much more to do if we are to create a more enabling environment and address some of cultural norms around breastfeeding that underpin the Borough's comparatively low breastfeeding rates.

It's vital that we do not regard breastfeeding as an individual issue that is solely the responsibility only of mothers. We must remove the barriers that stop successful breastfeeding, for example, we need to ensure that our shops and restaurants are breastfeeding friendly and ensure that our workplaces have breastfeeding-friendly policies. Given the wide-reaching and long-lasting benefits of breastfeeding, we must all commit to the challenge and vision laid out in this strategy.

I'm confident that we can deliver the aims of this strategy by working with our partners to foster a culture which is positive about breastfeeding. Working together we can help increase the number of babies who are breastfed and give them the best possible start in life. If we do achieve this ambition, we will have better health outcomes for children today and for generations to come.

Cllr Christine Bannon
Cabinet member for Health and Social Care
Knowsley Council



Breastfeeding is one of the most powerful ways we can support the health and wellbeing of both mothers and babies. As we embark on the implementation of this Breastfeeding Strategy for Knowsley, it is important to acknowledge the profound and lasting benefits that breastfeeding provides to our communities. It is not only a vital foundation for the physical and emotional development of infants, but it also offers a sustainable and accessible way for families to nurture and bond with their children.

This strategy reflects our commitment to ensuring that every parent and carer in Knowsley has the knowledge, support, and environment they need to make informed choices about breastfeeding. We recognise that each family's experience is unique, and we are dedicated to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment where all individuals feel empowered and supported in their breastfeeding journey.

In Knowsley, we are fortunate to have a strong and collaborative network of health professionals, community groups, local businesses, and families working together. This strategy aims to enhance those partnerships, provide targeted support, and promote breastfeeding as the normal and valued choice for infant feeding.

Through this strategy, we will work to provide the right support at the right time, aiming to remove barriers to breastfeeding including families from diverse communities, those with complex needs, and those who experience challenges in their breastfeeding journey.

Our vision is to build a culture in which breastfeeding is normalised, celebrated, and fully supported by our community. We believe that by working together, we can make this a reality for every family who wishes to breastfeed in Knowsley.

I am proud to introduce this strategy and look forward to the positive impact it will have on the health and wellbeing of future generations in Knowsley.

Victoria Leslie
Infant Feeding Lead
Knowsley 0-25 Health and Wellbeing Service
Wirral Community Health and Care NHS
Foundation Trust

The benefits of breastfeeding are incredible to both mother and babies and this strategy reflects just how important it is in Knowsley that we can offer the support required for our families to be able to embark on their breastfeeding journey. Being able to provide families in Knowsley with the knowledge and support to make an informed choice on breastfeeding their child is something that we are all committed to do.

We realise that not every breastfeeding journey is the same and that is why through this strategy, we will work together as a community of healthcare professionals, trained peer supporters, children's centres and local businesses to ensure that we are able to provide the best possible support to Knowsley families, as this is only what they deserve.

Our aim is to normalise breastfeeding in Knowsley and give every family that would like to breastfeed their child the right resources and support to do so. We believe this is possible by working together as a collaborative network.

I am extremely proud to introduce this strategy and I truly look forward to seeing the positive impact it will have in Knowsley.

Kathryn Clark
Service Manager for Breastfeeding Peer
Support in Knowsley
Everyone Health



OUR KNOWSLEY VISION

Our vision is to create a Knowsley breastfeeding culture, where families feel that they can make well informed choices about infant feeding. They are supported by a skilled and well-trained workforce, who are able to offer ongoing support whenever it's needed. We want Knowsley to be a place of collaboration, where everyone works together to support Knowsley to be a

breastfeeding friendly borough. We want all health professionals to share the same messages about infant feeding, as well as signposting and referring to specialist infant feeding support. Everyone is supported on their infant feeding journey, without judgement, and babies in Knowsley receive the best start in life, enabling them to thrive in the future.




**BREASTFEED.
ANYTIME.
ANYWHERE.**
Knowsley is a breastfeeding friendly borough.
There are many benefits for parents and babies and there is plenty of support available.
Find out more knowsleyearlyyears.co.uk/knowsley-start-for-life/

INTRODUCTION

We believe feeding is a special time for babies and their mothers/caregivers as it provides not only nutrition but, an opportunity for them to get to know one another. In addition to the nutrition and health benefits, breastfeeding supports babies to form strong bonds and develop healthy emotional and social attachments.

We are ambitious, passionate and committed to ensuring that everyone who wants to breastfeed in Knowsley has the support, skills and knowledge to do so, and for as long as they would like to. We want to create a culture in Knowsley where breastfeeding is normalised, valued and considered a skill. We are committed to reducing barriers that prevent people from breastfeeding or stop them breastfeeding before they would like to. We want everyone to feel empowered to breastfeed anytime and anywhere.

Whilst we respect that breastfeeding may not be possible or the right choice for everyone, we

will ensure that people have access to the right information, knowledge and support to make an informed decision.

“If breastfeeding did not already exist, someone who invented it today would deserve a dual Nobel Prize in medicine and economics. For while ‘breast is best’ for lifelong health, it is also excellent economics. Breastfeeding is a child’s first inoculation against death, disease, and poverty, but also their most enduring investment in physical, cognitive, and social capacity..”

Keith Hansen, 2016
Lancet Breastfeeding Series¹

The Knowsley Breastfeeding Strategy has been developed by the Knowsley Infant Feeding Working Group to support professionals working with expectant and new parents in Knowsley to increase breastfeeding rates in the borough.

The strategy draws on the learning, insight and evidence the group has collected to develop a single collaborative approach to achieve this goal. It is recognised that to make improvement there needs to be more consistency in the information provided to families by professionals and better co-ordination of delivery. The strategy offers clear direction and measurable action to drive change and take professionals on a developmental and improvement journey to increase the rates of breastfeeding in Knowsley.

We want every child in Knowsley to have the best start in life and we know that increasing the number of babies who are breastfed can help achieve this.

These are our six themes to help us accomplish this:

Our Six Themes are:

1. Normalising and creating a Knowsley breastfeeding culture
2. Ensuring everyone is well informed, empowered and supported to breastfeed anytime and anywhere
3. Ensuring support is in the right place and at the right time
4. Ensuring support is seamless, integrated and is constantly improving
5. Developing a skilled and well-trained workforce
6. Working together to reduce health inequalities and improve health equity

This document should be read alongside the [Knowsley Breastfeeding JSNA](#)

INCLUSION AND EQUALITIES STATEMENT

Throughout the strategy we have used the term **breastfeeding**, not to exclude anyone who uses a different term, but for brevity and clarity.

We recognise that the act of feeding a baby or babies from the chest or breast is an intimate experience that strengthens the bond with their baby, helping give them the best start for life.

We also acknowledge that not everyone who breastfeeds identifies as a woman (or was assigned female at birth). For some people who identify as non-binary, transgender, or gender-nonconforming the language surrounding breastfeeding may feel exclusionary and/or alienating. We also know that some people experience severe gender dysphoria² when breast or chestfeeding and it may not be the right choice for them. Equally for some people breastfeeding or chestfeeding may be something people view as an essential part of their identity as a parent but not related to their gender.³ We are committed to using the language that people using Knowsley infant feeding services feel most comfortable with.⁴



WHY IS BREASTFEEDING IMPORTANT?⁵

Breastfeeding offers many benefits (see figure 1) starting from baby's first feed and extending throughout their life, preventing disease, saving lives, reducing inequalities, saving money for the health services, the economy and families. It also has a positive impact on the environment, making breastfeeding a sustainable and eco-friendly choice too. Breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways to protect the health and wellbeing of both babies and mothers/breastfeeding parents. Breastfeeding promotes optimal development in early childhood and continues to offer nutrition and protection alongside other foods for as long as feeding continues. Breast milk is safe, clean, free, and in the first six months of life solely provides all the nutrients needed for protection and development. Modern formulas are only superficially similar to breast milk. Formulas contain no antibodies, no living cells, enzymes or hormones and the proteins and fats are fundamentally different from those in breast

milk. Breast milk is available whenever it's needed, without preparation and adapts as babies grow to meet their changing needs.

Despite this the UK has one of the lowest breastfeeding rates in the world. It is also a highly emotive⁶ subject as many families have not breastfed or have experienced the stress, disappointment and trauma of trying to breastfeed and not succeeding. Associated is the feeling of guilt felt by some parents that they have not done the best for their child. These negative experiences and feelings may make it difficult to have conversations about breastfeeding.

Improving breastfeeding rates could have a huge impact on improving child health and health inequalities in Knowsley. For example, reducing incidents of common child illnesses, providing equal access to nutrition, and reducing household spend on formula, including the

associated cost of equipment and energy to clean and sterilise. The cost-of-living crisis and increasing costs of infant formula may also put some babies at risk of undernutrition. YouGov data from January 2024 evidenced that 1 in 4 mothers with children under the age of 18 months struggled to afford formula⁷.

“Breastmilk works like a baby's first vaccine, protecting infants from potentially deadly diseases and giving them all the nourishment they need to survive and thrive”

**Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus,
Director-General of WHO⁸**



FIGURE 1
The Value of Breastfeeding⁹

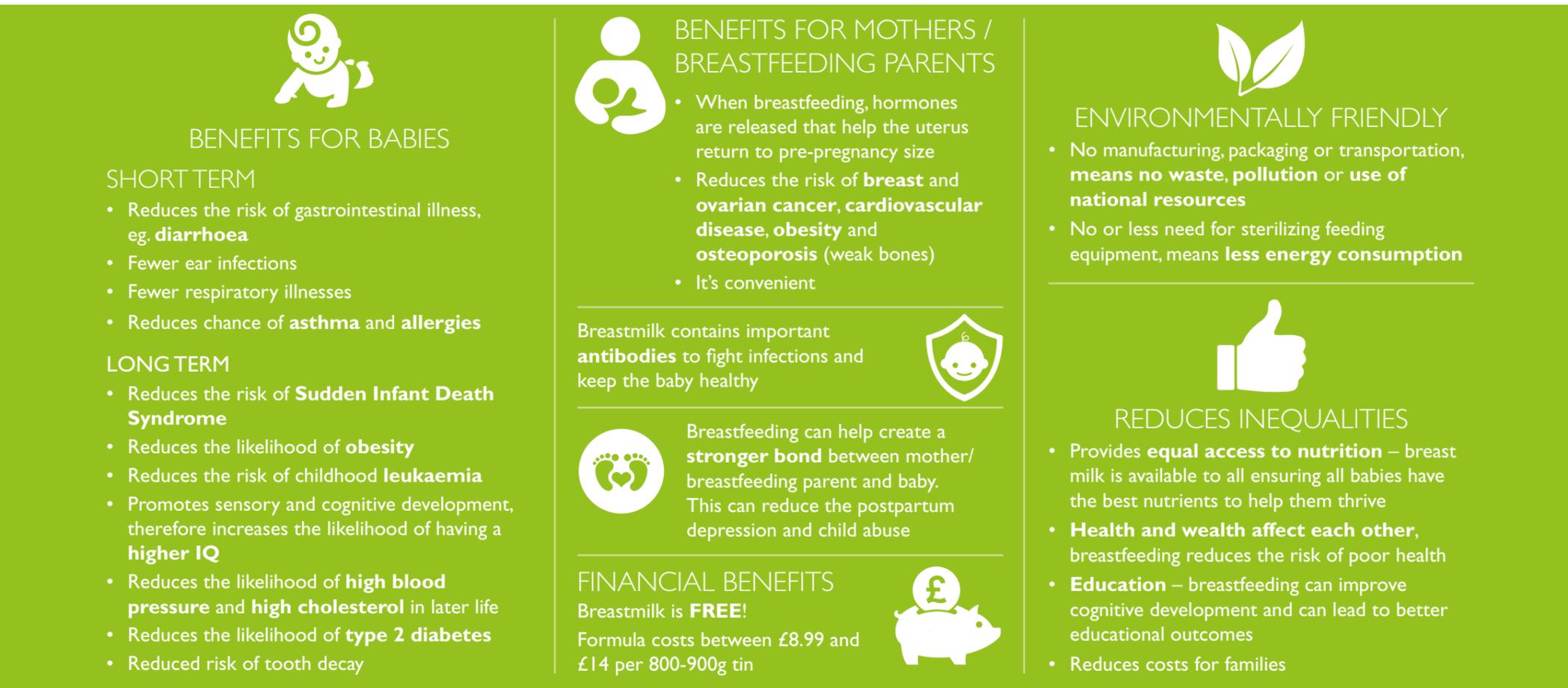


FIGURE 2
Why Breastfeed, a Knowsley Parents' Perspective¹⁰



BREASTFEEDING IN KNOWSLEY WHERE ARE WE NOW?¹¹



In 2020/21 **43.1%** of babies born in Knowsley had a first feed of breastmilk.



This figure is significantly below the England average of 71.1% and the regional rate of 54.7%.

Knowsley had the **fifth lowest** percentage of babies whose first feed was breastmilk in England. Increasing the numbers of babies who are breastfed in Knowsley will have a positive impact on the health of babies and children.

For example: Knowsley has the **second highest rate** in England of children in reception who are overweight (including obese), **almost one third** (28.8%).

This rises to **almost half** for those in the last year of primary school (45.5%).

Whilst there will be a variety of factors that influence weight gain, increasing breastfeeding in Knowsley may have a positive impact on reducing obesity, which is a risk factor for other health conditions.



31.3% Almost a **third** of babies (31.3%) in Knowsley were totally or partially breastfed at 6-8 weeks in 2023/24.

This is a significant improvement from 2018/19 when only 1 in 5 (21.3%) of babies were partially or exclusively breastfed.

Breastfeeding up to 12 months of age is associated with a decreased risk of tooth decay, which can impact on children's health and wellbeing. For example: pain leading to difficulty eating, sleeping, socialising and missing school.



Almost a third (31.2%) of 5 year olds in Knowsley have dental decay which can be detected by visual observation alone.

This is higher than the England average of 23.7% (2021/22).

Skin to skin contact as soon as possible after birth has been shown to make successful breastfeeding more likely.



There is growing evidence that skin to skin contact has numerous benefits including:

- creates a feeling of calm and relaxation
- regulates the baby's heart rate and breathing
- regulates temperature
- provides protection against infection
- stimulates baby's feeding instincts
- releases the hormones oxytocin which helps with bonding and lactation

On average, around 77%* of babies born in Knowsley had skin to skin contact with their mother within 1 hour of birth in 2023/24 (June 23 to July 24).

*15% of data was missing, so we do not know if skin to skin contact took place.

ALMOST A THIRD OF BABIES (31.3%) IN KNOWSLEY WERE TOTALLY OR PARTIALLY BREASTFED AT 6-8 WEEKS IN 2023/24.

THEME 1

NORMALISING AND CREATING A KNOWSLEY BREASTFEEDING CULTURE¹²

In Knowsley, we want to celebrate and normalise a mother's everyday experience of breastfeeding, facilitating a sense of normalcy for breastfeeding women at an individual, community, and social level.

Knowsley's breastfeeding initiation and maintenance rates are significantly lower than both the North West and England.¹³ We recognise that it is a mother's choice but that Knowsley's culture is often geared towards formula first. We want to make Knowsley a breastfeeding friendly borough and ensure that breastfeeding mums feel supported by healthcare professionals, partners, family members, friends, and the wider community, and in doing so, increase the chances that they will have a better breastfeeding experience.

Many mothers said they were more likely to breastfeed, if they were breastfed themselves or knew someone who had breastfed.¹⁰

If women see or experience other mothers breastfeeding, they often feel more confident to try it themselves, for example seeing another mother breastfeeding, can help reduce feelings of embarrassment and demonstrate that it can be done tactfully. From our insights the only 14-15-year-old girls with strong intentions to breastfeed were those that know they were breastfed themselves.

"To breastfeed, for me, was a natural choice; the default. I come from a family of breastfeeders, so I was never in any doubt"

Mother

"Formula is the first intention here, it's the culture"

Senior infant and Children's Worker

"My mum used to be like 'Oh God, you're going to do that in public?' and now she tells everyone and she's like my daughter breastfeeds"

Mother

"Mums who breastfeed are generally breastfed themselves"

Breastfeeding champion

"My mum and sister both breastfed, so it's what I know"

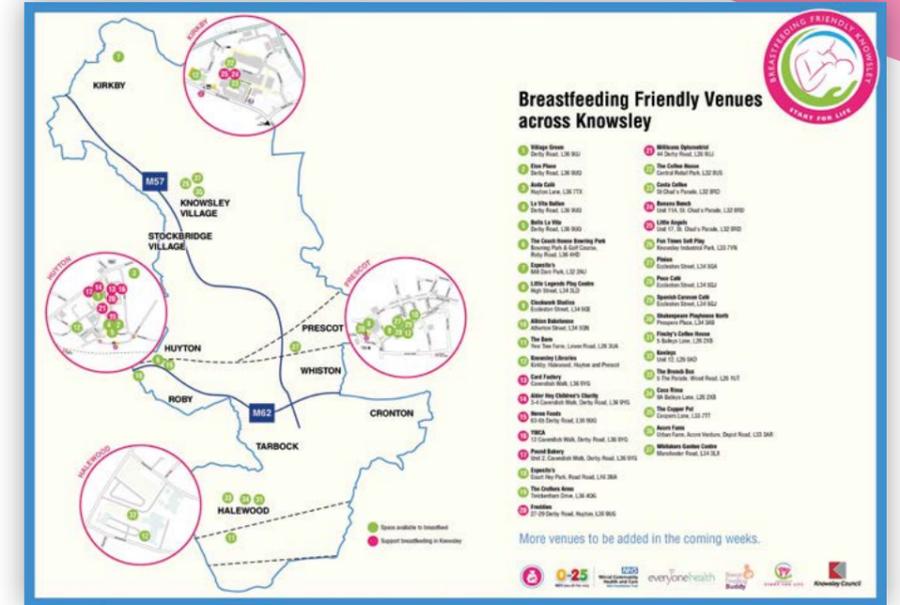
Mother

Changing attitudes to breastfeeding in public

Feeding baby on the move is an essential part of everyday life with young children. We want to see public attitudes towards breastfeeding change so that we can build a supportive and informed culture around it. Mothers said they felt anxious about breastfeeding in public because of the stigma associated with it. Worries about stigma and embarrassment around breastfeeding can lead to some women feeling unable or unwilling to breastfeed in public. Many of the negative feelings towards breastfeeding in Knowsley are stemmed from the fact it is simply not normalised in the area, however once people witness it happening, many find their thoughts and feelings are easily changed.¹⁰

We aim to destigmatise breastfeeding and make Knowsley a breastfeeding friendly borough by:

- Encouraging local businesses and organisations to sign up to our pledge, as well as displaying an easily recognisable sticker
- Displaying visible images of breastfeeding across Knowsley, particularly in public places, to normalise breastfeeding



'Denormalisation of breastfeeding starts early'

Our work with young people in schools shows us that attitudes towards infant feeding can be set years before parenting happens. We recognise that working with school age children helps open up space to start conversations at home and help normalise breastfeeding in the wider community. Implementing short, tailored interventions can help shift attitudes among children and young people and help them to become more positive towards breastfeeding.

"I learned that a lot of stuff was in breastmilk that I didn't know"

Y6 Pupil

THEME 2

ENSURING EVERYONE IS WELL INFORMED, EMPOWERED AND SUPPORTED TO BREASTFEED ANYTIME AND ANYWHERE

It is essential that all families have access to clear and timely infant feeding information and support to enable them to make informed decisions at all stages of pregnancy, after birth and beyond. This will also mean the greatest chance of having a successful feeding experience and encourage more people to try and continue to breastfeed.

Those who do not know how to initiate breastfeeding may decide to formula feed. They may have expectations that it will be difficult or painful and have other fears such as not having enough milk.

A key challenge in Knowsley is a lack of knowledge and understanding about breastfeeding, and associated issues, which has led to many myths and misconceptions.⁶ These myths persist and can make breast less appealing in comparison to formula feeding. Examples include: It's easier to bottle feed than to breastfeed, formula is the same as breast milk

and many women do not produce enough milk.

To address this problem, consistent and accurate information and advice will be available in multiple formats, including a strong digital offer, and we will ensure this is easy to access to help families find the support they need, when they need it.

Another myth that persists is that breastfeeding is always easy. Breastfeeding is a skill and like all skills it requires time and investment and can be a steep learning curve. However, this doesn't mean that formula feeding is easier. Breastfeeding can be difficult, particularly if the right help is not received to get started properly. With the right support and advice breastfeeding can be a beautiful, rewarding and fulfilling experience. However, it is important to talk about the realities as well as the positives, or we risk feelings of failure; embarrassment and guilt, which could lead to a reluctance to seek help.

Knowsley insight work found that some mums were insufficiently prepared to have realistic expectations of breastfeeding and unaware of how easy breastfeeding can be, once established. In addition, they were not always fully informed about how difficult the period just after birth can be. We found that issues such as sleep deprivation, and the pressure to formula feed from loved ones, can make them more inclined to choose formula feeding.

“When they have received adequate information and they understand the benefits to their babies health in the long term, predominantly that's what drives women's decision-making – they want the best for their babies and for themselves”

Senior Infant Feeding Specialist

To address these issues, we will focus on creating well-co-ordinated breastfeeding policies and interventions by healthcare and community professionals, dispelling myths and promoting UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiatives.

We will normalise, educate and inform communities about the benefits of breastfeeding from a young age by creating engaging and interactive breastfeeding workshops, which will be piloted in both primary and secondary schools across Knowsley. We recognise the importance of promoting breastfeeding and its benefits and we will do this through promotional campaigns across Knowsley, sharing established and reliable sources of breastfeeding information.

We want everyone in Knowsley to feel empowered and confident to breastfeed anytime, anywhere. However, our insight work found that some people were uncomfortable

breastfeeding in public. This is highly correlated with the lack of breastfeeding culture in Knowsley where breastfeeding is rarely seen in public spaces.

Some women highlighted that they had visited cafés and shops with 'breastfeeding friendly' stickers displayed in the window, which encouraged them to use that venue, as they knew that staff would be supportive, and it would be a safe environment to breastfeed in.

To ensure that everyone feels supported to breastfeed in public spaces, we have created the Knowsley Breastfeeding Pledge¹⁴. Local businesses can sign up to show that they are ready and willing to support breastfeeding. In addition, we have created a 'breastfeeding friendly' sticker that will be displayed across Knowsley businesses and other public spaces (such as libraries, leisure centres and workplaces) to provide reassurance that you

have the right to breastfeed anywhere you choose. This will be accompanied by a 'breastfeeding friendly' training offer for staff, so that they are aware of the pledge, the law and what they can do to be supportive.

We have created a guide, developed by a Knowsley Infant Feeding Lead, to support people to feel more confident about feeding when out and about. It offers reassurance, helpful tips and where to find help and support.



“It's helpful to see the sticker and it makes me more likely to go there, because I think that if the staff aren't bothered by it then they would be more likely to be on your side if something was to kick off”

Mother

THE KNOWSLEY BREASTFEEDING PLEDGE

Breastfeeding Friendly Pledge*



Our pledge to help you feel welcome and supported to breastfeed here

We respect your legal rights under the Equality Act 2010, to breastfeed in public without being discriminated against.

We will:

- Display a Breastfeeding Welcome sign in the window, to let people know we support and empower breastfeeding here.
- Provide a clean and comfortable environment to breastfeed.
- Never ask anyone breastfeeding to stop or move.
- Offer you a glass of water.
- Where possible, offer to take food and drink orders over to you, so you don't have to interrupt your baby's feed.
- Ensure staff are trained so that they are aware of the pledge, the law and how they can be supportive of your needs.

Organisation

Signed

Date

Scan to find out more



* We have used the term breastfeeding as it's widely understood and used, but, we recognise that people also use different terms such as: chestfeeding or bodyfeeding to describe the act of feeding and nurturing their babies.



THEME 3

ENSURING SUPPORT IS IN THE RIGHT PLACE AND AT THE RIGHT TIME

Most parents value infant feeding support, particularly when first trying to initiate breastfeeding and when experiencing challenges. Our Knowsley insight report reveals that support after birth can be 'hit and miss' and this can lead to those who may have wanted to try breastfeeding being advised or turning to formula feeding instead. Aside from practical advice, support with the physical, emotional and social aspects of feeding their baby may also be needed.

Whilst a range of Infant Feeding support is available across Knowsley, provided by midwives, health visitors, infant feeding specialists, and Bosom Buddies, who are trained local volunteers (peer supporters), there are some barriers in Knowsley to receiving the infant feeding support when it is needed. We recognise that:

- Insufficient staffing capacity has meant that sometimes there was an inability to provide the desired level of support, particularly when more in-depth support was needed
- Reduced capacity has also made it more difficult to signpost and direct mums and families to the support that is available across Knowsley, with many mums saying they find it confusing to navigate the support available after giving birth
- The nature of infant feeding is that it is not limited to a specific time or place, often support is needed at night or in the early hours of the

morning, when support options are limited. This can lead to seeking advice online or from a family member/friend, which can lead to misinformation

- The location of support matters

We know that some people in Knowsley find it difficult to travel. Birth complications (caesarean), caring commitments, financial constraints, lack of your own transport, and the local public transport network can all make it difficult to travel across the borough.

“It’s not because midwives don’t want to, it’s because they haven’t really got the time, and it’s very stressful for them, because they know what they should be doing to help”

Midwife

“I did try breastfeeding but I didn’t think she was getting enough milk... then the health visitor came days later and she did tell me about a group but I’d already put her on the bottle by that point”

Mother

We plan to address these barriers by:

- Maintaining or enhancing staffing levels across all our services as we know it will make a real difference to the initiation and sustainability of breastfeeding
- Providing personalised information and care, both on the ward and in the community, delivered by midwives and Infant Feeding support workers, helping to ensure everyone’s breastfeeding journey gets off to the best start
- Providing accurate and evidence-based advice in relation to positioning, attachment, and continued skin-to-skin contact
- Making sure there is support when breastfeeding challenges occur such as thrush, mastitis and blocked ducts. This will be delivered by our 0-25 Healthy Child Programme
- Continuing to invest and train Breastfeeding Peer Supporters. Not only do they have lived experience of breastfeeding, but they may also be more relatable, inspiring people to try breastfeeding. They may also help reach families that don’t engage or feel comfortable with health professionals. Additionally, by recruiting locally we are increasing to the social value in Knowsley and providing opportunities to learn new skills and educational opportunities

“Breastfeeding is amazing and it didn’t work out for me, but in another life I would have loved to have done it”

Mother

“I really struggled with breastfeeding at first, and I couldn’t have done it without the support and advice from the breastfeeding buddies”

Mother

- Looking at how we can streamline our breastfeeding support services and create simple, integrated patient pathways, which make it easier for new mums, parents and their families to navigate
- Exploring and investing in new technologies, which aim to provide accurate and up-to-date information and support at times when support options are limited



Knowsley Infant Feeding Support Services



Their Starting Solids workshops help parents get their babies off to a great start in life.

- The workshop helps parents decide:
- When their baby is ready to try solid food
- What foods to start with
- When their baby is hungry and when they've had enough
- How to make mealtimes an enjoyable experience

For more information speak to your local Children's Centre or Family Hub.



Helping parents who wish to breastfeed their baby or are already breastfeeding.

They also offer support and advice to parents who may be experiencing difficulties bottle or mixed feeding. Helping parents make the right feeding choice.

Tel: 0151 430 2325
E-mail: infantfeedingteam@sthk.nhs.uk

<https://sthk.merseywestlancs.nhs.uk/feeding-and-nurturing-your-baby>



Providing information, support to all parents to help them make informed decisions about feeding their babies.

They also provide training to healthcare professionals to ensure a high standard of care for pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers and their babies.

All families where a baby or babies are born breastfeeding or mixed feeding will be allocated to a breastfeeding support worker (Bosom Buddy) who will make contact via telephone to support with feeding and will offer a home visit.

They follow up on a regular basis and will offer referrals to Everyone Health Breastfeeding Buddies at 3 weeks and signpost to the breastfeeding drop-in groups.

Support is tailored to the family's needs and additional calls, or visits take place as needed.

The team follow up all breast or mixed feeders at 6-8 weeks to obtain their feeding status and if all is well, the referrals are closed at this point.

The team provides support on a needs led basis, if problems arise further down the line, families can get back in touch for further support.

Support from the Infant Feeding Lead/Lactation Consultant for more complex feeding issues is either via the phone or face to face at the Specialist Breastfeeding Clinic.
Tel: 0151 514 2666 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)
<https://www.wchc.nhs.uk/services/infant-feeding-team-knowsley/>



Offering virtual and face-to-face support for all families, both antenatal and postnatal.

Ensuring all parents receive support, information and skills needed to successfully breastfeed.

Drop-in sessions run every week at:

- Hilltop Children's Centre, L36 1XH – Monday at 10am – 12 noon
- The Pride Children's Centre, L33 5YP – Tuesday 12 noon – 2pm
- The George Howard Centre, L35 3SR – Wednesday 10am – 12 noon
- New Hutte Children and Families Hub, L25 1TT – Thursday 12: 30pm – 2:30pm

Tel: 07759 708090

<https://everyonehealth.co.uk/location/knowsley/>

E-mail: kathrynclark@everyonehealth.co.uk



City Health Care Partnership on the postnatal ward at Whiston Hospital

The team of Infant Feeding Specialists and trained Support Workers are here to support parents every step of the way.

They provide guidance and support on the ward at Whiston Hospital, helping families begin their feeding journey with confidence, whether breastfeeding or bottle-feeding.

WHILST A RANGE OF INFANT FEEDING SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE ACROSS KNOWSLEY, PROVIDED BY MIDWIVES, HEALTH VISITORS, INFANT FEEDING SPECIALISTS, AND BOSOM BUDDIES, WHO ARE TRAINED LOCAL VOLUNTEERS (PEER SUPPORTERS), THERE ARE SOME BARRIERS IN KNOWSLEY TO RECEIVING THE INFANT FEEDING SUPPORT WHEN IT IS NEEDED.

BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT BY STAGE

Schools

Normalise breastfeeding as part of 'Body changes session'

- Wirral Community Health Care (WCHC) lead
- School Year 5 – Discussion about breastfeeding and normalisation during the Body Changes Session in primary schools
- This session is aimed at normalising breastfeeding early
- Secondary school – exploring 'Myth Busting' sessions

Pregnancy booking and prenatal appointments

Breastfeeding information is given so an informed decision can be made on infant feeding choices

- Whiston Hospital
 - Three breastfeeding conversations during pregnancy including at the 28-32 weeks birth planning appointment
 - Booking information is shared with WCHC
 - Information about breastfeeding peer support is given on wards and contact numbers given for all local peer support
 - Ormskirk – mums with diabetes are offered a more in-depth conversation. Any worries or previous problems are referred to Infant Feeding Lead
 - Booking information isn't currently shared with WCHC but this should happen soon

Antenatal

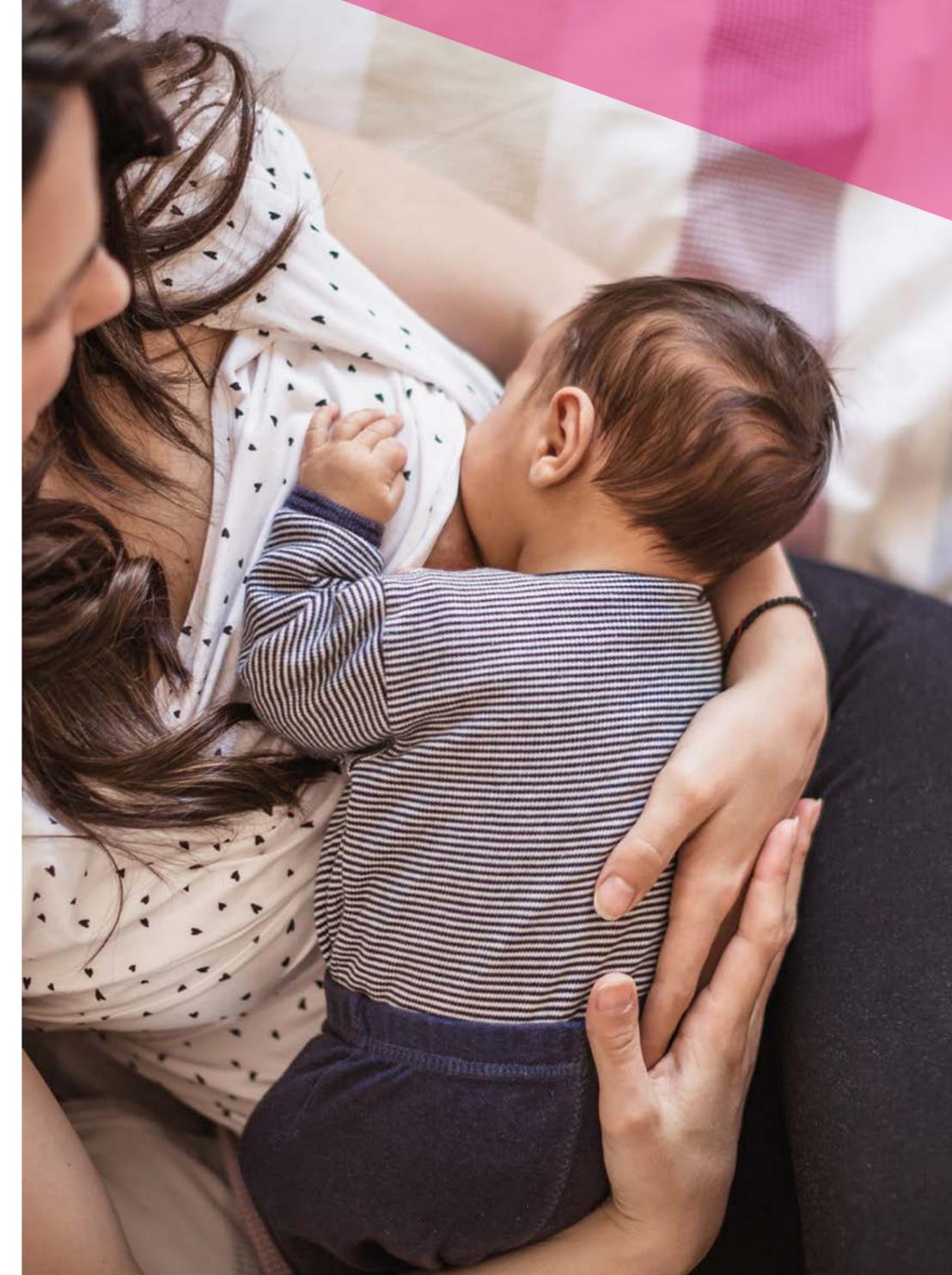
Timely and appropriate breast-feeding information and support throughout pregnancy by providers

- Hospitals: Liverpool Women's Hospital (LWH), Whiston and Ormskirk all provide regular Antenatal Workshops including Infant Feeding Information and Guidance
- Wirral Community Health & Care NHS Foundation Trust (WCHC) Knowsley 0-25 Service: Antenatal information letter and offer of face-to-face contact to prepare for the birth of your baby and have a conversation about Infant Feeding. Antenatal workshop co-delivered with Knowsley Early Years including breastfeeding education. (as of 2025)
- Offer of a further conversation with the hospital or 0-25 Service if there were previous breastfeeding problems they would like to discuss in subsequent pregnancy
- Everyone Health: visits to breastfeeding drop-in groups welcome during pregnancy to prepare for a breastfeeding journey
- Home-Start Knowsley Bump & Baby groups welcome for pregnant and postnatal peer support
- National Childbirth Trust – Online Offer
- National Breastfeeding 24/7 helpline
- Start 4 Life Breastfeeding Buddy – Ask Alexa or Google
- Baby Buddy – Best Beginnings APP

Postnatal

Ensuring support is received by the most appropriate provider to enable you to breastfeed for as long as you can

- Hospitals: Ormskirk And Whiston have Infant Feeding peer support on wards Mon-Fri. Liverpool Women's have limited peer support. All hospitals have an Infant Feeding Lead and some have additional staff
- All postnatal mothers are contacted following discharge from Whiston by their Infant Feeding Team
- Whiston Hospital hold an Infant Feeding Drop-In Fridays 10-12. This is for all Knowsley parents, no matter where they gave birth
- Hospital discharges from Whiston and LWH are shared with WCHC 0-25 Team if breast or mixed-feeding. There is an agreement that this information will also be shared by Ormskirk in the near future
- Following discharge and once information is received, WCHC 0-25 assign a Breastfeeding Support Worker (Bosom Buddy) who will make phone contacts and home visits as required
- With consent from mother WCHC can refer at 3 weeks post-partum to Everyone Health
- Everyone Health offers peer support volunteers and breastfeeding drop-in coffee mornings
- Home-Start Knowsley Bump & Baby groups welcome for pregnant and postnatal peer support
- WCHC 0-25 Service: Specialist Breastfeeding/Lactation Clinic – referral only for complex feeding problems
- National Breastfeeding 24/7 helpline
- Start 4 Life Breastfeeding Buddy – Ask Alexa or Google
- Baby Buddy – Best Beginnings APP
- Tongue Tie referrals can be made to Alder Hey, Whiston and Liverpool Women's



THEME 4

ENSURING SUPPORT IS SEAMLESS, INTEGRATED AND IS CONSTANTLY IMPROVING

Mothers need support from people who have received high quality infant feeding training, who are able to listen without judgement and deliver clear accurate breastfeeding feeding advice.

An understanding of infant feeding issues is essential for anyone providing healthcare to women/parents/families who are planning/expecting or have babies/young children. Having continuity and effective communication between different parts of the healthcare system is crucial.

One of the key findings from the Knowsley Breastfeeding Insight work was the importance of consistent, high-quality support.

They also found that women in Knowsley are open to breastfeeding but required encouragement from professionals to try it.

Whilst Knowsley has a number of health professionals and trained local volunteers (peer supporters) who have the skills and training to

provide the support needed, reductions in this workforce has resulted in diminished capacity.

Insufficient capacity has limited the level of support they could provide, resulting in some mums switching to formula-feeding (or it being the default). This strengthens the case for support that is integrated and collaborative across teams/organisations/sectors to make the most efficient uses of time, infant feeding specialists and resources.

The antenatal and postnatal pathway has a complex network of commissioner and provider relationships, including cross-boundary. The consequence of this, is that women are served by different organisations in different localities. This has resulted in development of local arrangements whereby provision for pregnant women and mothers is not consistent across Knowsley, although there are local examples of very good practice.



“... as a resident of Knowsley, a service user of maternity services in Knowsley, and an educator of midwives in Knowsley, there are a lot of things that are trying to be done, and one thing I observed as a service user is that there’s a lot of crossover between services at the point of birth onwards... why is it not more streamlined?”

Midwife

We know that in Knowsley the right support has the potential to persuade people to breastfeed. In Knowsley we have health professionals and trained volunteers who are passionate and committed to providing support for breastfeeding, so we need to make the most of their time and skills.

This is evidenced by the same insight work, that found stakeholders in Knowsley also suggested collaboration as a solution. Existing teams could and should work more collaboratively to ensure that they collectively focus on all the right areas/stages, helping each other to manage time and resources more efficiently. In addition, Knowsley insight work, highlighted that having a number of teams/people involved in care following birth, felt confusing

and left some unclear as to who they should contact for help.

Some health professionals shared outdated information around breastfeeding which caused confusion which negatively impacted on initiation and maintenance of breastfeeding. Whilst it is not reasonable or practical to expect every health professional to be an infant feeding expert, everyone should avoid misinformation and signpost to an infant feeding specialist. Insight work found that mums/parents were not always appropriately signposted, and was symptomatic of what was described as a lack of a joined-up approach. They found referrals into breastfeeding support groups were often self-referral, rather than via health professionals, resulting in low take-up.

Consistent access to reliable support is critical, as even mums/parents/caregivers that are prepared for breastfeeding realities need a clear point of contact to support them through difficulties.

Gaps in support were highlighted, particularly antenatally and in hospital immediately after birth, which was considered 'hit and miss'.

Knowsley insight work concluded that many of the gaps in women's Capability, Opportunity and Motivation to initiating and/or continuing breastfeeding could be filled through wider availability of antenatal and postnatal support and education.

Having a Knowsley Breastfeeding Integrated Care Pathway and a Referral Pathway are key to ensuring consistent, reliable support, as well as increasing breastfeeding rates in the borough.

Many opportunities to strengthen communication and partnership working exist in the borough, for example:

- Knowsley Infant Feeding Working Group which brings together staff responsible for commissioning and providing infant feeding support in hospital and community settings.
- All services and organisations working to provide infant feeding support in Knowsley operate under the Start For Life umbrella.
- Family Hubs, which aim to give families access to a broad and integrated range of services in local support centres. This is an opportunity to work with local families to develop a better understanding of what works best for them and find out whether some areas of the borough and different types of families need other kinds of services and support.

Knowsley Start for Life are looking to improve their offer for families, particularly their digital offer:

For example, they are exploring the option of a one stop shop for virtual help which will

be customised to meet the needs of families in Knowsley. They are designing an app with a software company with a proven track record in this area, to create a 'proof of concept' using Infant Feeding. This will then be tested by Knowsley's Start for Life team and local families.

The plan is an app that is compatible with different devices and provides a unified digital gateway, consolidate resources, information, help and support. The ability to have all resources in one place where parents/families can be directed, has the potential to avoid mixed messages and the confusion over where to find support. The app would also allow users to feedback any issues to make improvements.

Analytics from the app would help to ensure the offer and services are what is wanted and needed, as well as providing the opportunity to refine the Infant Feeding offer based on data and ensure decisions are evidence led.



THEME 5

DEVELOPING A SKILLED AND WELL-TRAINED WORKFORCE

Within Knowsley we already have a wealth of support, provided by highly skilled, experienced, well trained and committed professionals, who are passionate about supporting people to breastfeed.

However, not all health professionals are offering the same advice, which can sometimes be inaccurate.

Insight work in Knowsley found that inconsistent and inaccurate information from some professionals undermined positive breastfeeding messages. Some health professionals were sharing outdated information around breastfeeding leading to confusion around – and in some cases abandonment of – breastfeeding as mums were not sure what to believe.

It is essential that those offering advice about infant feeding share the same messages. Mothers/parents/families should be signposted to a health professional who is well trained and

accredited to offer breastfeeding advice and support. We need to ensure that the infant feeding contact information is easy to access, as well as being promoted using channels mothers/parents/care givers in Knowsley use. There must be clear communication channels between professions and voluntary services across the borough, this includes data collection and reporting systems to make sure the right support is being given. This theme is closely linked to theme 4: Ensuring support is seamless, integrated and is constantly improving.

How will we do this?

All health professionals and organisations working with pregnant women and families in Knowsley will be trained in services which are UNICEF Baby Friendly Accredited. UNICEF UK Baby Friendly accreditation provides a framework through which hospital

and community services can improve standards of infant feeding support.

Knowsley Children's Centres have been awarded a Certificate of Commitment in the first step towards gaining recognition from the UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK) Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI). The accreditation for being "Baby Friendly" is based on a set of interlinking evidence-based standards for maternity, health visiting, neonatal and children's centre services. In terms of infant feeding, the initiative seeks to enable public services to better support families with feeding, developing close and loving relationships so that all babies get the best possible start in life. Wirral Community Health & Care NHS Foundation Trust (WCHC) 0-25 have achieved Stage 3 BFI accreditation (Fully Accredited) and is supporting the Knowsley Early Years Service to achieve BFI accreditation.

After gaining a Certificate of Commitment, Stage 1 of Baby Friendly accreditation requires facilities to develop the mechanisms to achieve the following standards:

1. Have written policies and guidelines to support the standards
2. Plan an education programme that will allow staff to implement the standards according to their role
3. Have processes for implementing, auditing and evaluating the Standards
4. Ensure that there is no promotion of breastmilk substitutes, bottles, teats or dummies in any part of the facility or by any of the staff

The Knowsley 0-25 Health and Wellbeing Service's Infant Feeding Lead has an ongoing and regular training programme.

They provide training and support to not only other staff in the 0-25 service but, to Children's Centre staff, Breastfeeding Champions, BABS (Building Attachment and Bonds Service), Everyone Health staff. This ensures not only that training is to a high standard and current but, that infant feeding messages are clear and consistent across the different services/teams/organisations working with mothers, caregivers and families across Knowsley.

Specific examples of the training are:

- The Breastfeeding and Relationship Building BFI training, which is delivered over two days by The Infant Feeding Lead, to all new starters working in 0-25 service working with 0-5s. All champions, the Early Help

Manger and Group Lead also attend

- Manager/Guardian Training
- Refresher 1 day training for staff working with 0-5s
- 3 hour training for School Nurse staff

In addition, the Infant Feeding Lead provides regular updates to the teams to ensure they have the latest information and are reminded of the key messages.

They (as well as their team members) regularly audit staff to check that the learning from the training is being implemented and having the intended impact. This ensures that the Breastfeeding Friendly requirements and standards are being met.

The Knowsley Infant Feeding Working Group was established to support existing work, identify barriers to breastfeeding and working collaboratively to overcome these. The group has also been redesigning the universal infant feeding offer to meet the needs of families in Knowsley.

This group is part of the wider Knowsley Family Hubs Start for Life programme, which provides a place-based way of joining up the planning and delivery of family services, and has collaboration at its core.

All services and organisations working to provide infant feeding help and support in Knowsley operate under the Start For Life umbrella. This provides an opportunity for local services and organisations to come together to work towards our common goals.

This puts Knowsley in a good position to ensure that all those working in infant feeding receive appropriate training for their role and can benefit from the knowledge, skills and experience of others.



THEME 6

WORKING TOGETHER TO REDUCE HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND IMPROVE HEALTH EQUITY

Knowsley is the second most deprived local authority in England¹⁵ and stark health inequalities exist in the borough. Health inequalities are avoidable, unfair and systematic differences in health between different groups of people. The effects of inequality are multiplied for those who have more than one type of disadvantage. Intra-borough inequalities also exist in Knowsley, for example the life expectancy in Northwood for women is 76.2 years, compared to 84.6 years in Whiston and Cronton.¹⁶ We must ensure that reducing health inequalities and providing equal access to services and support is central to everything we do to change the disadvantages many children and families in Knowsley experience.

Improving breastfeeding rates has real potential to support a reduction in inequalities within Knowsley by improving health outcomes. Breastfeeding has numerous health benefits (outlined in the Why is Breastfeeding

Important section) a specific example is that breastfed babies are up to 25% less likely to become obese children.¹⁷ Knowsley has the second highest proportion of children who are overweight and obese at 4-5 years and the highest aged 10-11 years.¹⁸ There are several medical conditions that are associated with obesity for example type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, high cholesterol and some cancers, which significantly impact on life expectancy, healthy life expectancy and quality of life. Therefore, increasing the number of babies being breastfed in Knowsley could also play an important part in reducing childhood obesity and preventing future disease and illness.¹⁹

Knowsley's low breastfeeding rates are contributing to widening health inequalities, particularly as rates are not equally distributed among different population groups. Many babies born in Knowsley are not

experiencing the protective health benefits that they would have had, had they been breastfed, and their mothers/parents are also missing out on the health benefits of breastfeeding.

There are cost implications to formula feeding for families, in a period when the cost of living is causing families to struggle to meet their basic needs. It was estimated that in January 2023 27% of UK households with children under the age of four experience food insecurity.²¹ Formula feeding is expensive and requires higher energy costs to make up feeds, and clean and sterilise bottles/feeding equipment. By helping more families to breastfeed we can help save them money, as well improve their health and wellbeing. In addition to the cost to families, there is also a cost to the NHS. A Unicef UK report calculated that moderate increases in breastfeeding could see millions in potential annual savings to the NHS. It could also mean tens of thousands fewer hospital

admissions and GP consultations.²²

Poor breastfeeding rates are not equally distributed among population groups. For example, maternal age, socio-economic status, ethnicity, mother's/parent's educational level, smoking and deprivation levels are all risk factors impacting on breastfeeding.²³ This means that the poorest families are often the ones that are not benefiting from the numerous benefits of breastfeeding.

It is important that we do not place the responsibility of improving breastfeeding rates solely with the individual, it is a collective responsibility. Many factors influence the decision to breastfeed or continue breastfeeding, many of which are beyond the control of the individual, such as the breastfeeding culture, health systems, available services, employment, workplaces not providing support, etc.

In Knowsley we will ensure equity in access to services and support. We will use our collaborative and integrated services via the Family Hubs model to offer families breastfeeding services and support that meet their needs.

We will support families with healthy habits such as: eating well, being physically active, stopping smoking and reducing drinking, all of which have huge impact on health. We will also signpost families to support and services that impact on the wider determinants of health for example, housing, education, employment, including your rights in relation to pregnancy, maternity and breastfeeding.

We will lead by example, making changes such as reviewing Knowsley Council Policies to ensure they are supportive of breastfeeding, creating comfortable, breastfeeding friendly spaces in our buildings. This links into our other themes, particularly, ensuring support is in the

“Breastfeeding is a natural ‘safety net’ against the worst effects of poverty...”

Exclusive breastfeeding goes a long way toward cancelling out the health difference between being born into poverty and being born into affluence...

It is almost as if breastfeeding takes the infant out of poverty for those first few months in order to give the child a fairer start in life and compensate for the injustice of the world into which it was born”

James P Grant
Executive Director of UNICEF
(1980-1995)²⁰

right place and at the right time and developing a skilled and well-trained workforce.

BREAST MILK IS SAFE, CLEAN,
FREE, AND IN THE FIRST SIX
MONTHS OF LIFE SOLELY
PROVIDES ALL THE NUTRIENTS
NEEDED FOR PROTECTION
AND DEVELOPMENT.



NORMALISING AND
CREATING A KNOWSLEY
BREASTFEEDING CULTURE

OUR BREASTFEEDING STRATEGY COMMITMENTS

THEME 1: NORMALISING AND CREATING A KNOWSLEY BREASTFEEDING CULTURE

No.	Objective	What we know	Recommended actions	Owner
1.1	Establish a network of breastfeeding advocates across Knowsley	Mothers are more likely to breastfeed, if they were breastfed themselves or knew someone who had breastfed	Implementing an effective peer support programme Identify and upskill breastfeeding champions across Knowsley	Breastfeeding Peer Support Service Knowsley Infant Feeding Teams
1.2	Changing public attitudes towards breastfeeding and reducing stigma associated with breastfeeding	Worries about stigma and embarrassment around breastfeeding can lead to some women feeling unable or unwilling to breastfeed in public Once people witness breastfeeding happening, many find their thoughts and feelings are easily changed	Encouraging local businesses and organisations to sign up to our pledge and display our sticker Displaying visible images of breastfeeding across Knowsley	KMBC Public Health and Family Hubs
1.3	Implementing short, tailored interventions for children and young people	Working with school age children helps open up space to start conversations at home and help normalise breastfeeding in the wider community Can help shift attitudes among children and young people and help them to become more positive towards breastfeeding	Developing and delivering short interactive learning sessions about breastfeeding and early nutrition for school aged children and young people	KMBC 0-25 Healthy Child Programme Knowsley Family Hubs Operational Leads

THEME 2: ENSURING EVERYONE IS WELL INFORMED, EMPOWERED AND SUPPORTED TO BREASTFEED ANYTIME AND ANYWHERE

No.	Objective	What we know	Recommended actions	Owner
2.1	Dispelling breastfeeding myths and promoting UNICEF BFI	A key challenge in Knowsley is a lack of knowledge and understanding about breastfeeding, and breastfeeding relating issues, which has led to many myths and misconceptions	Creating well-co-ordinated breastfeeding policies, and interventions Dispelling breastfeeding myths. Promoting UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiatives	Knowsley Family Hubs Operational Leads BFI Champions KMBC Public Health
2.2	Inform and educate communities about the benefits of breastfeeding	Knowsley mums say that they are not fully informed how difficult the period just after birth can be	Piloting breastfeeding educational workshops across Knowsley Primary and Secondary Schools	KMBC 0-25 Healthy Child Programme
2.3	Promoting the importance of breastfeeding	There is also a lack of understanding about how easy breastfeeding can be once established, in comparison to formula feeding	Promotional campaigns across Knowsley including including outdoor advertising and digital campaigns	KMBC Public Health and Family Hubs

THEME 2: ENSURING EVERYONE IS WELL INFORMED, EMPOWERED AND SUPPORTED TO BREASTFEED ANYTIME AND ANYWHERE

No.	Objective	What we know	Recommended actions	Owner
2.4	Create 'Breastfeeding Friendly' Public Spaces to support breastfeeding mothers/parents/families feel welcome to in public spaces	We know that people are encouraged to breastfeed in public spaces if they know a business or venue is supportive. We know that breastfeeding in Knowsley needs to be more visual in order to normalise 'Breastfeeding friendly' stickers encouraged women to use a venue, as they know the staff will be supportive	Encourage businesses to sign up to the Knowsley Breastfeeding Pledge Create a map of all Breastfeeding Friendly Businesses and venues across Knowsley to promote them for the benefit of families and those businesses Create Milk Trails to promote those businesses and create a fun activity for families Deliver training to staff to educate and support them on the breastfeeding pledge, the law and how they can support breastfeeding Display 'Breastfeeding Friendly' stickers across venues and businesses in Knowsley Create a guide to support people to feel confident to breastfeed when they are 'out and about'	KMBC Public Health and Family Hubs KMBC 0-25 Healthy Child Programme

THEME 3: ENSURING SUPPORT IS IN THE RIGHT PLACE AND AT THE RIGHT TIME

No.	Objective	What we know	Recommended actions	Owner
3.1	Establish and maintain safe staffing levels across all our breastfeeding and maternity services	Challenges related to staffing has made it difficult for our professionals to support mothers to try or initiate and sustain breastfeeding, when they are having difficulties or require more in-depth support	<p>Monitor staffing levels across all local breastfeeding support services.</p> <p>Look for opportunities for additional staff and volunteering roles across all our breastfeeding support services</p>	<p>Knowsley Family Hubs Operational Leads</p> <p>0-25 Healthy Child Programme</p>
3.2	Increase capacity to ensure we are providing essential support at the right time	Reduced team sizes have resulted in diminished capacity to provide antenatal support/education; sufficient postnatal support; outreach work	<p>Increasing capacity across the system by measuring productivity, evaluating processes and exploring new funding opportunities</p> <p>Continue to recruit and train Breastfeeding Support Workers</p> <p>Provide services and support in the same place whenever possible for example Family Hubs/Children's Centres</p>	<p>Knowsley Family Hubs Operational Leads</p> <p>KMBC 0-25 Healthy Child Programme</p> <p>Breastfeeding Peer Support Service</p> <p>Knowsley Infant Feeding Teams</p>

THEME 3: ENSURING SUPPORT IS IN THE RIGHT PLACE AND AT THE RIGHT TIME

No.	Objective	What we know	Recommended actions	Owner
3.3	Streamlining services and creating integrated pathways	Reduced capacity has also made it more difficult to signpost and direct mums and families to the support that is available across Knowsley, and many mums saying they find it confusing to navigate the support available after giving birth	<p>Effectively streamlining breastfeeding services and pathways</p> <p>Educate wider healthcare and community professionals on support options available</p> <p>Create opportunities for collaboration and coproduction between services, service-users and professionals</p> <p>Allow mums/parents to self-refer</p>	<p>Knowsley Infant Feeding Group</p> <p>Knowsley Family Hubs Operational Leads</p>
3.4	Investing in new technologies to provide greater support when mums need it the most	New mums most need support with feeding in the middle of the night and the early hours of the morning, when support options are limited	Explore new technologies (including Anya App and Bee-Bot) to provide information and support, when they need it the most	Knowsley Family Hubs Operational Leads

THEME 4: ENSURING SUPPORT IS SEAMLESS, INTEGRATED AND IS CONSTANTLY IMPROVING

No.	Objective	What we know	Recommended actions	Owner
4.1	Identify gaps in breastfeeding support	There are gaps in support, multiple organisations and teams who provide support that overlap	<p>Carry out a review of all breastfeeding support that is available in Knowsley</p> <p>Continue to work with our local hospitals to ensure that breastfeeding support is available on the maternity wards, for all Knowsley women that need this</p> <p>Continue to explore digital offers including using an app as 'one stop shop' for virtual help</p> <p>Use analytics from the app to identify gaps in support and to communicate with families to make them aware of support</p> <p>Add top tips and videos to provide help outside of working hours</p>	<p>Knowsley Family Hubs Operational Leads</p> <p>Knowsley Infant Feeding Group</p> <p>KMBC Public Health and Commissioning</p>

THEME 4: ENSURING SUPPORT IS SEAMLESS, INTEGRATED AND IS CONSTANTLY IMPROVING

No.	Objective	What we know	Recommended actions	Owner
4.2	Make best use of staff and resources and improve communication between services and teams	<p>Mums/parents can find this confusing and do not know who/where to go for support</p> <p>Some health professionals are not signposting and referring to infant feeding specialists</p> <p>Collaboration has the potential to find gaps in available support by streamlining support and reducing duplication, increasing efficiency and making best use of stretched resources, potentially helping with capacity challenges</p>	<p>Continue to collaborate and build new professional relationships with people supporting families expecting/with babies and young children – Identify common objectives.</p> <p>Find effective communication channels for sharing available support so all health professionals are clear on where and who can refer and signpost for specialist infant feeding support</p> <p>Continue to explore shared digital solutions which contain Infant Feeding support and services, that Health Professionals can signpost to as well increase awareness of support to avoid duplication</p>	<p>Knowsley Family Hubs Operational Leads</p> <p>Knowsley Infant Feeding Group</p>

THEME 5: DEVELOPING A SKILLED AND WELL-TRAINED WORKFORCE

No.	Objective	What we know	Recommended actions	Owner
5.1	Continue to implement recognised quality standards for infant feeding	Inconsistent and inaccurate information from some professionals undermines positive breastfeeding messages Services which implement the Baby Friendly standards are nationally recognised as providing quality care	Knowsley Early Years Service to achieve BFI Accreditation Wirral Community Health Care 0-25 and Knowsley Early Years Service to gain re-accreditation in the future To make sure new staff receive BFI training, and this knowledge and information is shared with all staff supporting babies, their mothers/parents and families	BFI Champions KMBC 0-25 Healthy Child Programme KMBC Public Health
5.2	Volunteers and paid peer supporters to receive high quality training	Consistent access to reliable support is critical, as even mums/parents that are prepared for breastfeeding realities need a clear point of contact to support them through difficulties	Everyone Health is signed up with Association of Breastfeeding Mothers (ABM) Managers will attend BFI training and continue to ensure volunteers and peer supporters receive high quality training To continue to work alongside partners to understand training opportunities and to feedback any gaps	Breastfeeding Peer Support Service KMBC 0-25 Healthy Child Programme Knowsley Infant Feeding Teams BFI Champions

THEME 5: DEVELOPING A SKILLED AND WELL-TRAINED WORKFORCE

No.	Objective	What we know	Recommended actions	Owner
5.3	Ensure consistent training is available for all Infant Feeding staff and volunteers	Knowsley insight research recommended consistent training to be given to all health professionals, to reduce the likelihood of conflicting/outdated advice being given	Develop an Infant Feeding Support Competencies Framework, which sets out the knowledge, skill and attributes needed by the workforce, as well as share knowledge and skills Review the training needs of health professionals not covered by the BFI	KMBC 0-25 Healthy Child Programme Breastfeeding Peer Support Service Infant Feeding Teams KMBC Public Health
5.4	All health staff and volunteers know where to signpost mothers/parents and families	Knowsley insight research found that there was considerable inconsistency in the information being given by health professionals about infant feeding. They recommend better direction for professionals on who to refer/signpost to and when	Creating a "Knowledge Bank" for health professionals, sharing information about trusted breastfeeding support services Empowering health professionals to be encouraging and feel confident when referring to breastfeeding support services	Knowsley Infant Feeding Group

THEME 6: WORKING TOGETHER TO REDUCE HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND IMPROVE HEALTH EQUITY

No.	Objective	What we know	Recommended actions	Owner
6.1	Targeted initiatives: In areas of the highest deprivation, younger mothers/parents and underserved groups for the greatest benefit in inequality reduction	<p>There is a strong relationship between breastfeeding and deprivation, rates of breastfeeding increase as deprivation decreases</p> <p>We know some groups are less likely to breastfeed (including younger mothers)</p>	<p>Support initiatives and campaigns should consider what the additional needs of families living in areas of deprivation might be. Support may need to be more concentrated in the areas of highest deprivation in the borough and groups who are less likely to breastfeed</p> <p>Representation is important, so we need to see images and people who women/parents in Knowsley can relate to</p>	<p>Knowsley Infant Feeding Group</p> <p>KMBC Public Health</p>
6.2	Use data and local insight to ensure support and provision meets the diverse needs of our population to reduce health inequalities	<p>Health inequalities are unfair and avoidable difference in health across the population, and between different groups within society</p> <p>We know that some population groups are less likely to breastfeed, and this can further contribute to health inequalities for those groups</p>	<p>Collate data sources related to breastfeeding in Knowsley</p> <p>Analyse data to understand which population groups are not breastfeeding, and what we can do to better support them</p> <p>Consider co-producing services with mothers/parents and families who are less likely to breastfeed</p>	<p>Knowsley Family Hubs Operational Leads</p> <p>KMBC Public Health</p>

THEME 6: WORKING TOGETHER TO REDUCE HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND IMPROVE HEALTH EQUITY

No.	Objective	What we know	Recommended actions	Owner
6.3	Provide breastfeeding information that is clear, accessible and visually engaging	<p>We know that messages have been considered confusing in the past</p> <p>We also know that Knowsley has higher historic levels of SEND needs throughout the population, and general literacy levels are lower</p> <p>We also know that women from lower socio-economic populations are less likely to breastfeed.</p>	<p>Consideration should be given to ensuring health education, and messages are clear and accessible, considering the needs of the target audience – They should be from trusted sources and shared by people within those communities, whilst most people have a high level of trust in the NHS, friends and family are often a key source of information</p> <p>Ideally, we should carry out consultation and seek input from communities within Knowsley.</p>	<p>Knowsley Infant Feeding Group</p> <p>KMBC Public Health</p>

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