

## Update on Breastfeeding peer support service in Barnet

HOSC 5 October 2020

### Background

Officers presented a paper at the May and October 2018 HOSC committee meetings outlining progress in delivering Breastfeeding Support in Barnet. This paper is a progress update and includes the co-design work undertaken to inform service improvements.

The breastfeeding peer support service includes a mix of paid and volunteer supporters. The service is part of the health visiting service and delivers support and advice to residents of Barnet and continues to hold UNICEF breastfeeding accreditation at level 2. The volunteers deliver training to other professionals equipping them with the skills and knowledge to promote and support breastfeeding mothers. They run virtual groups, across the borough, a telephone support line, Facebook page, as well as support in the post-natal wards of Barnet Hospital and one to one advice as required. This service is funded within the current Central London Community Healthcare Trust (CLCH) contract, as part of the Health Child Programme, to 30 September 2021.

Breastfeeding data collection for Barnet has historically, been very poor for a variety of reasons including poor data quality and a lack of review at 6 – 8 weeks by the health visitors. However, introduction of the health visitor mandated review at 6 – 8 weeks and the breastfeeding supporters undertaking a telephone call to breastfeeding mothers has helped to capture this data more accurately. The reported breastfeeding rate (fully and partially) in Barnet has improved from a recorded 5.2% in 2018/9 to Quarter 1 (April to June 2020) 63% which is above the England average of 48.15%.

### Co-design of service

In 2018/19 the breastfeeding service and the Commissioner, undertook four co-design meetings. They were attended by the peer supporter, service users, midwifery, the clinical commissioning group and stakeholders from the voluntary and community sector including Home-start, National Childbirth Trust, and Breastfeeding Network. Council services including public health, children centres, and the 0-19 early help service also engaged in the co-design workshops. Service users and stakeholders were invited to voice their views, during the four co-design meetings, to inform and shape the service offer. Below are a few 'you said / we did' examples from before the Coronavirus pandemic;

"It would have been really helpful to have access to breastfeeding services at weighing clinic"	Now we will be at all baby clinics! Part of the Barnet transformation project.
Make it known that everyone is welcome to the drop ins – you don't have to be exclusively breastfeeding to come, may be mixed feeding etc Also, advertise that dads are welcome	Facebook posts actively advertising everyone is welcome + service leaflet new design repeats this.
A continuing group general support being around mums feeding 6+ months, and for emotional support and encouragement	with the transformation of drop ins at baby clinics, we are aiming to have 3 "baby groups" (already have 1 hope) 1 per locality, which again will be there for all ages, mixed

	feeders, mums dads whoever.
Letting families know of the breastfeeding service antenatally to help with understanding of how breastfeeding works, latch etc	Signposting to our service early on from local and neighbouring hospitals via service leaflet. Will be adding service details to antenatal letter sent out to parents as well as including in electronic new birth pack.

The outcome of the workshops was a service evaluation report which was considered at the newly convened Barnet breastfeeding forum in January 2019. The evaluation report was used by the breastfeeding forum in February 2020 to develop the service action plan presented in Appendix B. The action plan is designed to help improve breastfeeding incidence in Barnet as well as contribute to a consistent approach across North Central London STP while also taking into consideration the Mayors London breastfeeding strategy which is currently in development. The plan continues to be reviewed and update on a quarterly basis which has continued during the Coronavirus restrictions.

### Next steps

The breastfeeding data issues in Barnet have been resolved and the breastfeeding peer support service is stabilised, reaching more mothers who need help with breastfeeding. The next stage is to implement the action plan to streamline breastfeeding messages and to widen the breastfeeding message into the community so everyone who wishes to breastfeed feels confident, has consistent advice and is supported to do so. This is a collective effort and requires the organisations involved in this agenda to work closely together. The forum oversaw the drafting of a 'care of feeding concerns in infants' pathway, Appendix C, which is due for launch in 2021 to help streamline the consistency of advice given in Barnet.

A significant part of the next steps plan is to establish a Barnet Breastfeeding Welcome scheme which aims to:

- make it easy for mums to find welcoming and supportive places to breastfeed;
- recognise businesses and organisations for promoting and supporting breastfeeding.

This scheme provides a charter for businesses to sign up to in order to take part and ensure their businesses meet a certain standard following which they then display a sticker in their window which informs breastfeeding mothers that they are welcome to breastfeed on the premises. Governance is through audits of the businesses to ensure they continue to meet the charters obligations.

The commissioners and CLCH managers will continue to lead the breastfeeding forum with service users, the breastfeeding supporters and stakeholders to ensure the improvements of the last two years continue to be built upon.

*Clare Slater-Robins, Senior CYP Commissioner, LBB*

*Annabel Burkimsher, Interim CBU Lead, Central London Community Healthcare Trust*

*Collette McCarthy, Assistant Director Commissioning & Strategy, LBB*

## **Appendix B – Action Plan 2020**



Action plan - July  
2020.xlsx

## **Appendix C – Care of feeding concerns pathway (Draft)**



Pathway of care for  
feeding concerns in I