



Report of: Director of Public Health

Report to: Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 14 June 2018

Subject: Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative in Leeds

Are specific geographical areas affected? If relevant, name(s) of area(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. Raise awareness and celebrate all the excellent work happening in Leeds with regard to Unicef Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI) and how it supports the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2021.
2. Highlight the effective joint approach to this across the services – Health Visiting, Maternity services, Children’s Centres, and how we can further develop links with other services/organisations.
3. Inform members of the Board about the BFI Gold assessment and award and how their support will enhance sustainability of this work in Leeds.

Recommendations

The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:

- Have an awareness of the importance and value of breastfeeding for the health and wellbeing of families today and for future generations.
- Note the importance of promoting, supporting and protecting breastfeeding policy in all areas where appropriate.
- Consider the impact of implementing the Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes - to protect babies and their families from harmful commercial interests.
- Take opportunities to promote a positive breastfeeding culture, to normalise and support – city centre venues, public transport, and workplace.
- Be aware of challenges and opportunities and communicate these to the BFI Guardian.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The aim of this report is to evidence the links with the BFI, Breastfeeding, infant feeding and relationship building work and the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2021 priorities.
- 1.2 This is an opportunity to share the joint work between Public Health and Health Visiting towards the BFI Gold award, to raise awareness of what this means to Leeds.
- 1.3 To demonstrate the link with the powerful evidence about the benefits of breastfeeding and the importance of breastfeeding for saving lives and improving health outcomes with one of the top commitments of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy – to give every child in Leeds the best start.

2 Background information

- 2.1 This paper is in response to Board members discussion and comments at the Health and Wellbeing Workshop in April 2018 where the Chair raised the topic of BFI Gold accreditation for Leeds Health Visiting Service.
- 2.2 NICE guidance CG37 recommends services – hospital, primary, community and children centre settings – that support women postnatally should implement BFI as a minimum standard. BFI standards is attached as Appendix 2.
- 2.3 The Health Visiting Service and Maternity Service in Leeds are currently recognised as Baby Friendly accredited. Children’s Centres in Leeds have more recently started the process and have achieved a Certificate of Commitment.
- 2.4 Councillor Charlwood (Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adults and Chair of the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board) accepted the invitation to be BFI Guardian, along with Marcia Perry (Executive Director of Nursing, LCH) and attend the BFI Leadership Team workshop and meetings. The BFI Guardian role is attached as Appendix 1.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 Ensuring the ‘best start’ for every child in Leeds is one of the priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Breastfeeding is a key factor in ensuring that all babies have the best start in life. Not only does breastfeeding confer a range of short and long term health benefits on both mothers and their babies it also promotes the formation of healthy attachment relationships, which forms the emotional and social bedrock for all future development. Increasing breastfeeding rates plays an important role in enabling Leeds to achieve a number of health, wellbeing and social outcomes including reducing infant mortality and reducing childhood obesity.

- 3.2 The Department of Health recommend that all babies are breastfed exclusively for six months, with ongoing breastfeeding alongside complementary foods for at least one year. The World Health Organisation recommends the same however extending breastfeeding for two years and beyond.
- 3.3 Not breastfeeding can have major long-term negative effects on the health, nutrition and development of children and on women's health, this includes conditions such as diabetes which requires lifelong treatment.
- 3.4 Breastfeeding rates in Leeds rose with the implementation of Baby Friendly standards from 2007, however have remained generally static over recent years. Around 70% of women in Leeds start breastfeeding their baby (just below England average), with 49% still providing breastmilk at 6-8 weeks (above England average).
- 3.5 Breastfeeding rates vary greatly across the city and are based on many things other than choice. In Leeds, the lowest breastfeeding rates are among the young white British population where formula feeding is seen as the cultural norm.
- 3.6 In April 2017, working collaboratively with Public Health, Leeds Health Visiting Service was recognised by Unicef Baby Friendly Initiative as providing an outstanding service for families with regard to infant feeding and relationship building information and support. The Gold award assessment took place on May 9th 2018, excellent feedback was received and a final report from the designation committee will be released after 3rd July.

4 Health and Wellbeing Board governance

4.1 Consultation, engagement and hearing citizen voice

- 4.1.1 Mothers are regularly contacted for feedback regarding their infant feeding experience, whether breastfeeding or bottle feeding, and includes breastfeeding group audit and breastfeeding pump loan scheme audit. This audit cycle informs practice and influences training for practitioners.
- 4.1.2 NHS organisations use the 'Friends and Family' test for quality purposes.
- 4.1.3 Families are invited to consult on the Leeds Breastfeeding Plan, which includes implementation of BFI, at events during Leeds Baby Week.
- 4.1.4 A Healthwatch report (Nov 2017), attached as Appendix 3, gave an overview of people's views and experiences of the health visiting service in Leeds. Healthwatch Leeds worked in partnership with Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust (LCH) and spoke to over 240 people in clinics and breastfeeding groups across Leeds.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 Services offered by Health Visiting, Maternity and Children's Centres are universal, meaning all families access the same offer with additional support when needed e.g. interpreters are available and home visits where access is an issue.

4.3 Resources and value for money

4.3.1 The 2016 report by Nigel Rollins et al 'Why invest, and what it will take to improve breastfeeding practices?' found that not breastfeeding is associated with lower intelligence and economic losses of about \$302 billion annually or 0.49% of world gross national income. It also states that breastfeeding provides short-term and long-term health and economic and environmental advantages to children, women, and society

4.3.2 Baby Friendly's report, Preventing disease and saving resources: the potential contribution of increasing breastfeeding rates in the UK, found that moderate increases in breastfeeding would translate into cost savings for the NHS of many millions, and tens of thousands of fewer hospital admissions and GP consultations.

4.3.3 Breastfeeding protects both mothers and babies from a wide range of common illnesses, many involving life-long healthcare costs. Sustaining BFI in Leeds gives an opportunity to further increase breastfeeding rates which could help realise potential cost savings.

4.3.4 BFI in Leeds is included in service specifications and managed within the individual service budgets. Once a service is accredited to Gold the cost reduces significantly and the process changes from large costly assessments to an annual subscription.

4.4 Legal Implications, access to information and call In

4.4.1 There are no access to information and call-in implications arising from this report

4.5 Risk management

4.5.1 Failure to sustain BFI in Leeds may lead to adverse effects on the health and wellbeing of mothers and babies and increase costs for many services in Leeds.

5 Conclusions

5.1 The way babies are fed has a profound effect on their present and future health. The World Health Organisation (WHO) and UK governments recommend exclusive breastfeeding up to six months of age, with continued breastfeeding along with other foods thereafter.

5.2 The evidence to support embedding BFI is clear, if more women choose to and are supported to breastfeed there will be improved health and wellbeing as well as improved social, physiological and developmental outcomes for children and families in Leeds. Ultimately this could lead to reduction in healthcare and associated costs.

- 5.3 Improved health and wellbeing for families in Leeds can be achieved by further embedding and developing the BFI agenda. It is already recognised locally in associated Strategies and Plans, however there could be a wider reach for example more robust plans for integrated working with more 3rd sector organisations and the justice system.

6 Recommendations

The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:

- Have an awareness of the importance and value of breastfeeding for the health and wellbeing of families today and for future generations.
- Note the importance of promoting, supporting and protecting breastfeeding policy in all areas where appropriate
- Consider the impact of implementing the Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes - to protect babies and their families from harmful commercial interests
- Take opportunities to promote a positive breastfeeding culture, to normalise and support – city centre venues, public transport, and workplace.
- Be aware of challenges and opportunities and communicate these to the BFI Guardian

7 Background documents

- 7.1 None.

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How does this help reduce health inequalities in Leeds?

The 2017 breastfeeding initiation data provided by LTHT show that in Leeds the largest groups not initiating breastfeeding are the white ethnic group (British and Irish) and those living in decile 1 (deprived Leeds). Evidence from the Lancet Series on Breastfeeding (2016) shows breastfeeding saves lives in all countries and for people of rich and poor backgrounds alike, and that breastfeeding is one of the most effective preventive health measures for children and mothers regardless of where they live. Implementing the BFI standards across Leeds, including implementing the Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes which is a core part of the standards, could be a way to help reduce health inequalities in Leeds.

How does this help create a high quality health and care system?

NICE guidance CG37 recommends services – hospital, primary, community and children centre settings – that support women postnatally should implement BFI as a minimum standard. Ensuring services in Leeds comply with BFI standards ensures quality in this area of care.

How does this help to have a financially sustainable health and care system?

Breastfeeding protects both mothers and babies from a wide range of common illnesses, many involving life-long healthcare costs. Sustaining BFI in Leeds gives an opportunity to further increase breastfeeding rates which could help realise potential health and care cost savings.

Future challenges or opportunities

There are real opportunities to take this work wider with the support of the Health and Wellbeing Board and wider partners. Leeds has already shown real commitment to BFI and improving standards in Health and Children's Services, evidence of this is Leeds Health Visiting Service being in the process of becoming a 'Gold service'.

A big challenge for this work is that we currently live in a formula feeding culture, where conversations about breastfeeding can be challenging. No parent should have to feel the pain of any implication that they have not done the best for their child, but the UK context has become so fraught that conversations about breastfeeding are shut down. There is an opportunity to remove the barriers for women who want to breastfeed, this can be partly achieved by fully implementing BFI, and to look at how we build relationships to enable evidence based messages to be shared and heard.

In 2016 Unicef Baby Friendly Initiative announced their Call to Action to remove the barriers to breastfeeding. There is the opportunity for Leeds to become involved in supporting this, again highlighting Leeds as being a beacon for this work.

Priorities of the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-21	
A Child Friendly City and the best start in life	X
An Age Friendly City where people age well	
Strong, engaged and well-connected communities	X
Housing and the environment enable all people of Leeds to be healthy	
A strong economy with quality, local jobs	
Get more people, more physically active, more often	
Maximise the benefits of information and technology	
A stronger focus on prevention	X
Support self-care, with more people managing their own conditions	
Promote mental and physical health equally	
A valued, well trained and supported workforce	X
The best care, in the right place, at the right time	X