



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

All Wales Breastfeeding
Five Year Action Plan

July 2019

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Introduction

Breastfeeding is important for the health and development of infants and their mothers, and is linked to the prevention of major health inequalities. The provision of human milk is the most accessible and cost-effective activity available to public health which is known to prevent a range of infectious and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), specifically gastroenteritis, childhood obesity, diabetes type 2 and maternal breast cancer ^{1,2}.

‘Breastfeeding is the cornerstone of child survival, nutrition and development and maternal health. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life, followed by continued breastfeeding with appropriate complementary foods for up to 2 years or beyond’ (WHO 2003) ³.

With this ethos and the belief that every child in Wales should receive the best start in life (Wellbeing of Future Generation’s act 2015), breast feeding can enhance this start. It is acknowledged however that this method of feeding may not be every woman’s choice. It is imperative that all families have access to sufficient evidence based information to make an informed choice and subsequently that they are supported in whatever choice they make.

The UK has one of the lowest breastfeeding rates in the world; 80% of babies are breastfed at birth and only 1% are exclusively breastfed by 6 months ⁴, with breastfeeding rates lower among women in areas of higher deprivation, exacerbating health inequalities. Breast feeding rates in Wales have remained fairly static despite investment in services and UNICEF baby friendly initiative accreditation. It is acknowledged that this is a multi faceted issue related to population health, initiation and maintenance of breast feeding.

Wider cultural attitudes and practices continue to influence how a women may choose to feed her baby and if breast feeding, the length of time she continues. There has been limited increase in breastfeeding rates over the last decade; therefore it is strongly believed that new approaches are required as small adjustments will not be sufficient to drive the change that needs to take place.

We have identified strategic goals and aims to guide action in both immediate support for women and families and the wider population health incentive to consider breastfeeding as an option and ensure it is culturally acceptable.

Overarching Strategic Goal

More babies in Wales will be breast-fed, and for longer, and the current inequalities in breastfeeding rates between groups will be reduced.

The strategic goal will be delivered through the following two strategic approaches working in parallel both at a population level, each with their own defined goals, one strand looking at

the Health and Care System and one strand looking at whole system and whole population approaches.

Strategic Approach 1: Health System

This approach will develop system-wide action to bring about maximise the potential of the NHS in Wales to support infant feeding goals.

Strategic Aims

1. Supporting families to make informed decisions about how to feed their baby.
2. Enabling mothers who have opted to breastfeed to do so successfully for as long as they would like to do so.
3. Creating and sustaining an environment that supports breastfeeding in the healthcare system.

Strategic Approach 2: Population Level and Whole System

This approach will develop population-wide action to support optimal infant feeding for families across Wales.

Aims

1. Supporting the population to make informed choices on infant feeding.
2. Influencing social norms – towards breastfeeding being seen as the normal way of feeding a baby and accepted as part of everyday life.
3. Creating settings and environments which reflect a positive and inclusive ethos towards breastfeeding (e.g. schools, workplaces, public places/transport).
4. Controlling the advertising and managing the availability of less optimal infant feeding methods (e.g. follow-on formula milk).

Where there is a clear overlap between the approaches i.e. the availability of high quality data, these are brought together.

Background

Concern over the uptake and continuation of breastfeeding in Wales has led the Minister for Health and Social Services to request a Task and Finish group⁸ to deliver a review and recommendations. The group, comprising clinical leads, professional bodies, public health, mothers and Welsh government officials met bi-monthly between September 2017 and January 2018, delivering a set of recommendations which were approved by the Minister in July 2018. They set out recommendations for future service provision and where these should be targeted to support women to enhance breastfeeding rates in Wales, by promoting initiation, continuation and removing barriers, through a 'prudent approach'.

Recommendation 1: to ensure clear systems and processes are in place to collect, analyse and disseminate infant feeding data

Recommendation 2: strategic steering group to ensure All Wales approach and strategic direction

Recommendation 3: a Welsh Infant Feeding Network (WIFN) to provide operational leadership to improve breastfeeding rates

Recommendation 4: a new strategic Infant Feeding lead post on every Health Board

Recommendation 5: to develop an All Wales Action Plan in line with current Welsh Government policies; quality assurance will be provided through the development and monitoring of key performance indicators

Recommendation 6: the Strategic infant feeding lead will develop, implement and monitor local action plan informed by the All Wales action plan to meet local needs; each health board will provide assurance of progress against the key performance indicators annually

Recommendation 7: each health board will provide a coordinated support model which is inclusive of health professionals, peer supporters, education and community led services

Recommendation 8: A review of current education standards relating to infant feeding in line with NMC review of Nursing and Midwifery standards. To ensure that breast feeding is a core component of midwifery, neonatal and paediatric training

Recommendation 9: A quality assurance model is required to set and monitor standards. It is recommended that an options appraisal with a cost benefit analysis be undertaken of the following:

- *Option 1 maintain status quo: Health boards currently hold individual contracts with BFI if so wished or undertake another form of quality assurance, which is then reported at performance boards annually.*
- *Option 2 "Once for Wales" model contract across maternity, neonatal, HV and education with a three year inbuilt evaluation of outcomes. BFI has been asked to cost this model.*

- *Option 3 a peer review model (similar to perinatal psychiatry), which enables units to review each other against an agreed set of standards. This would provide opportunities for shared learning and consistency. This model would require initial pump priming of funding to set up and establish.*

This further coincided with the publication of 'A Healthier Wales: Our Plan for Health and Social Care 9 (June 2018)⁶ defining commitment to a whole system approach to improve the health and well-being of the people of Wales, with the implementation led by the multi-disciplinary National Transformation Board. The Task and Finish group report 10 recommended the creation of this All Wales breastfeeding action plan and a strategic oversight group to support delivery.

Public Health Wales has also in tandem been reviewing action to increase breastfeeding rates at a population level with a focus on reducing inequalities. They have commissioned and undertaken a number of pieces of work to support this development. This has included:

- a report on Asset Based Approaches to Breastfeeding from the University of Chester;
- a review of the evidence for community-based infant feeding intervention and developing recommendations to inform intervention design. The research team comprising staff from DECIPHER at Cardiff University, Swansea University and from NCT charity were guided by a principle of seeking to enable more women living in low-breastfeeding-rate Welsh communities to breastfeed.
- A behavioural analysis to understand the barriers and facilitators underpinning the decision to initiate and continue breastfeeding.

In 2018 Public Health Wales and Welsh Government participated in an international Breastfeeding Benchmarking Project led by Yale University and by the University of Kent in the UK. The recommendations from this project, developed by a stakeholder panel, focus particularly on population level or national level policy and action:

- *A strategic action plan on breastfeeding defines and delivers smart, transformative goals and adequately resourced, whole system action on breastfeeding, with national and local leadership, coordination and accountability.*
- *Consistent, evidence-informed and long term government funding and resourcing commitments underpin Wales' multi-component breastfeeding action plan and enable local delivery of transformative provision for mothers, babies and families.*
- *A nuanced engagement and promotion framework that is co-created, consistent and evidence-based is embedded to bring about social change to normalise breastfeeding across Wales.*
- *Strengthened and coordinated core education and training standards across multi-agency partners working with mothers, babies and families in Wales embed a consistent approach for quality improvement across all settings. These standards are evidence-based and monitored.*

- *Robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms deliver reliable, explanatory and comparable data on a timely basis to inform strategy, service improvement and planning, and deliver quality assurance.*
- *Practical actions are delivered in Wales to embed good practice standards among Welsh government and public organisations concerning Maternity Protection rights and the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent relevant WHA resolutions. Strategic action from Wales drives a meaningful case for change on UK-wide issues, including practitioner education and the legislative environment from a Welsh perspective.*

This Action plan has been developed by a group of stakeholders across Wales and is informed by the wider population health workstreams to initiate local and national actions identified as providing a strong framework to support women and families choosing to breastfeed. The goals will be monitored by a strategic steering group to ensure effectiveness of implementation.

References

1. Victora et al (2016) Breastfeeding in the 21st century: epidemiology, mechanisms, and lifelong effect. *Lancet* 387 10017: 475–490.
2. Renfrew et al (2012) Preventing disease and saving resources: the potential contribution of increasing breastfeeding rates in the UK, UNICEF UK
3. WHO (2011) Exclusive breastfeeding for six months best for babies everywhere. https://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/statements/2011/breastfeeding_20110115/en/
4. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
5. McAndrew et al (2012) Infant Feeding Survey 2010, Health and Social Care Information Centre
6. Welsh Government (2018) A Healthier Wales: our Plan for Health and Social Care

Action 1

To ensure clear systems and processes are in place to collect, analyse and disseminate breast-feeding data at population health, national and local levels.

National action

Work with key partners to:

- ensure that a single robust evidence based data and indicator framework is in place to support population level surveillance and needs assessment; performance management and quality improvement available at an appropriate geographical level and in a timely way to inform action.
- review and strengthen routine data collection at birth, 10-14 days, 6-8 weeks and 6 months, with consideration of definitions, collection/recording mechanisms and data completeness. Develop and deliver a plan of work to improve data quality, strengthen collection mechanisms and dissemination.
- review the evidence base and feasibility for adopting new data collection points, for example at 48 hours, 15 months and 27 months, to align with the data collected and visiting pattern of the Healthy Child Wales Programme and international benchmarking as set out in the World Health Organisation Breastfeeding Recommendations. If it is determined that there is a need to collect data at additional points in time, work with all key stakeholders to achieve Welsh Information Standards Board approval, as part of the implementation plan.
- review and improve the definition of “intention to breastfeed” (consider recording of outcome from meaningful conversations with mothers during the antenatal period). If agreed, include this indicator within the overall quality improvement plan.
- establish a national framework to monitor women’s experiences and evaluate community-level intervention effectiveness. Alongside quantitative data returns, findings will inform a continuous cycle of quality improvement to drive a positive and measurable impact on breastfeeding outcomes and reducing health inequalities.
- establish a robust evaluation plan that underpins the All Wales Breastfeeding Action Plan components and its delivery/oversight with clear feedback channels into both the national steering group and Welsh infant feeding network (WIFN) to inform ongoing planning and delivery.
- develop mechanisms to ensure Health Boards are accountable for the timely and accurate submission of infant feeding data by community child health offices to the National Community Child Health Database (NCCHD).

Local action

- develop mechanisms of accountability for service providers within health boards (including midwives, health visitors and general practitioners) to be accountable for the timely and accurate submission of infant feeding data to their local community child health office.
- regularly examine and interrogate local information to understand breastfeeding trends, breastfeeding behaviour and critical points, such as drop off and cessation. Use this information to inform comprehensive service monitoring and planning.
- work with local service providers to improve the accuracy, completeness and timeliness of infant feeding data submitted to local community child health offices.
- use quality improvement methodologies and the national framework once established, to drive data-informed continuous improvement across the care pathway for infant feeding. This will aim to deliver a positive and measurable impact on outcomes and reduce health inequalities.
- work with local public health teams, regional partnership boards and public service boards to reflect on the data, monitor improvements and develop evidence-based supporting actions where appropriate.

Evidence base

World Health Organization and UNICEF (2003) Global strategy on infant and young child feeding.

McFadden et al (2017) Support for healthy breastfeeding mothers with healthy term babies
Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2017, Issue

Rollins et al. (2016) Why invest, and what it will take to improve breastfeeding practices?
Lancet 387, 491–504.

BBF Recommendations Briefing Pack

https://publichealth.yale.edu/bfci/countries/great_britain/index.aspx

Action 2

To establish a strategic steering group to ensure an All Wales approach to improving breastfeeding rates in Wales. The strategic steering group will set strategic direction and advise government on future direction, covering population health approaches and service delivery

National action

- establish a strategic steering group comprising key stakeholders to be accountable for the oversight and monitoring of breastfeeding practices and service support in Wales
- consider options for the inclusion of a breastfeeding Tier 1 target in the NHS Performance Framework
- ensure effective mechanisms are in place for population surveillance and make recommendations for action to improvement of provision.
- review relevant international and national evidence, action and policy options and consider the implications for Wales
- develop annual work plan informed by engagement with key stakeholders and recommendations from WIFN for potential improvement work and escalation of issues
- receive annual work plan for WIFN and inform development of future workplan incorporating work within national policy direction
- monitor variation in breastfeeding rates within and between population groups and across health boards. Initiate opportunities to share best practice and adopt an All Wales approach.
- monitor Intermediate Medium Term Plans (IMTPs) from health boards to ensure local strategic focus on breastfeeding support and practices are reflected within local action plans.
- develop an evaluation strategy to measure success in achieving the agreed goals and targets defined in the All Wales five year multi-component action plan.

Local action

- ensure health board intermediate medium term plans (IMTPs) contain actions to be taken forward for breastfeeding local action plans informed by health board strategic infant feeding leads. The Integrated Mid Term Plan (IMTP) should provide clarity on

goals, smart actions and resource allocation in order to gain sign off.

- ensure local action plans are in place to develop improved uptake in breastfeeding initiation and maintenance, using quality improvement methodologies such as process mapping to drive continuous improvement across the care pathway for infant feeding.
- develop effective local partnership mechanisms for the strategic and operational review of infant feeding activity and outcomes, including health boards, local public health teams, primary care clusters, public service boards and regional partnership boards
- using the Design Principles under the Transformation Plan, work collaboratively with Health Boards, local Infant Feeding leads and experts in Infant Feeding from statutory, third sector and academic backgrounds to support the delivery of IMTPs that are both evidence based and locally tailored, informed by theories of change which map how the All Wales Action Plan might operate at individual, community and population level and across different cultural/breastfeeding rate contexts.
- develop evaluation mechanisms to success of interventions to improve local breastfeeding initiation and maintenance rates and service user feedback
- provide an annual report to national steering group on effectiveness of interventions and effect on initiation and maintenance rates to include service user feedback.

Evidence base

BBF Recommendations Briefing Pack

https://publichealth.yale.edu/bfci/countries/great_britain/index.aspx

Welsh Government (2018) A Healthier Wales: our Plan for Health and Social Care

Action 3

To establish a Welsh Infant Feeding Network (WIFN), to provide operational leadership to improve breastfeeding rates. The WIFN will advise and undertake delegated work for the Strategic Steering Group to whom they are accountable and link with the other UK Countries

National action

- Welsh Government and Public Health Wales to support the formation and maintenance of the WIFN group. The WIFN will comprise of health board Strategic Infant Feeding leads and other key stakeholders
- the WIFN will aim to improve breastfeeding care and culture in Wales by sharing best practice and utilising the current evidence base.
- WIFN will provide representation to the National Infant Feeding Network (NIFN) in order to share national expertise across the UK, research and evidence based best practises relating to breastfeeding, lactation, infant feeding and very early childhood development, that will ultimately improve and deliver optimal health and wellbeing outcomes for mothers and babies (and their families) in Wales.
- members of WIFN will work with the strategic infant feeding leads and local breastfeeding teams within each Health Board. This will create a policy framework and systems to improve the quality and access for parents to all infant feeding support throughout the hospital and community Healthcare system
- WIFN will carry out scoping work, related to their operational role, requested by the strategic steering group and provide professional advice on issues related to initiation and maintenance of breastfeeding to inform the annual workplan.
- Welsh Government to provide WIFN with appropriate resources for the implementation of evidence based innovations and/or additional breastfeeding support services eg: tongue tie division/creation of National milk bank, as prioritised by the strategic steering group

Local action

- health boards to support representation by strategic infant feeding leads on the WIFN group to ensure a coordinated national approach to implementation of national action plan.
- health boards will develop a research and evidence based service framework that will provide quality care standards across healthcare services and will be supported by WIFN.
- health board strategic leads will work with WIFN to ensure quality assurance mechanisms are used to maintain the quality of care and information given to mothers and babies regardless of chosen feeding method.
- WIFN will implement local evidence based innovations, aimed to increase and support breastfeeding, with adequate resourcing and support from Welsh Government, Public Health Wales and Health Boards.
- WIFN and local health boards will support local educational training needs of all staff in contact with mothers, babies and their families. This will ensure that healthcare staff have the appropriate knowledge, skills and education to enable them to: support all parents to build a relationship with their baby, promote, protect and support breastfeeding, and as appropriate help parents when using other forms of infant feeding.

Evidence base

Unicef Baby Friendly Standards
WIFN Terms of Reference
Welsh Government Breastfeeding Strategy plan

Action 4

To create and establish a new strategic breast feeding lead post in every Health Board to provide a strategic leadership role across health board services including maternity, neonatal, paediatric and community. This role description will be created to ensure strategic health board leadership for breastfeeding and accountability to nurse director.

National action

- to develop a business case to be presented to Regional Partnership Boards with alignment to First 1000 days collaborative and Public Health Wales agenda
- to develop an all Wales job description for all Wales approach for strategic breast feeding lead post
- to identify sources of regional partnership funding for the strategic breast feeding lead

Local action

- to identify governance framework for strategic health board leadership for breastfeeding and accountability to nurse director.
- to ensure an inclusive strategic approach to breastfeeding across health care provision for service users and employees.

Evidence base

Investing in a Better Start: Promoting Breastfeeding in Wales 2001

Transfer of responsibility for Breastfeeding to Public Health Wales in 2011

Transforming Health Improvement in Wales 2013 '*need for further ongoing consideration*'

Healthier for all - Early Intervention agenda

ACEs & support to vulnerable families / Perinatal Mental Health agenda – strategic interface

A Healthier Wales

Action 5

Each strategic breast feeding lead will develop, implement and monitor a local action plan informed by the All Wales action plan to meet local needs. Each health board will provide assurance of progress against the key performance indicators at annual performance boards.

National action

- to strengthen the leadership and accountability across the whole healthcare system to drive improvements in breastfeeding across Wales health boards will be accountable to the strategic steering group through strategic infant feeding leads for service provision relating to breastfeeding uptake and support.
- to strengthen partnerships with all partnership agencies such as local authority aiming to influence cultural attitudes towards breastfeeding strategic infant feeding leads will ensure a coordinated approach to local action plans.
- strategic infant feeding leads will inform the coordinated approach to annual workplan of strategic steering group
- the strategic leadership group will provide a mechanism for performance monitoring of local health board data collected and informed by strategic infant feeding leads

Local action

- to engage with key stakeholders to have a collaborative goal to increase breastfeeding initiation and continuation in local communities.
- to provide leadership to a specialist infant feeding workforce and training programme for midwifery, health visiting and neonatal services across health board.
- to report to Nurse director level and ensure accountability at executive level for breastfeeding practices
- to ensure sustainability for the health care provision across all services. The need to develop and maintain robust educational pathways for pre and post registrants in nursing, midwifery and medical fields.
- to collect and monitor local data to inform national strategic direction and work plans
- to provide an annual local action plan to strategic steering group and evidence of inclusion within IMTP and inclusion of key stakeholders and partners
- to collate evidence of service user feedback and actions to address local needs
- to work with WIFN to share best practice and maintenance of national standards

Action 6

Each health board will provide a coordinated support model which is inclusive of health professionals, peer supporters, professional education and community led services.

National action

- develop a knowledge and skills framework to support the development of a skilled and confident NHS workforce (primary and secondary care) and third sector at different levels (informed, skilled, expert)
- review mechanisms for the training and development of staff across the healthcare system (primary and secondary care and third sector) on infant feeding at three main levels pre and post registration.
- develop and agree quality standards for the use of peer or lay support in the delivery of breastfeeding support.
- develop evidence based service models and guidance for the role of peer support in NHS Wales breastfeeding support services.
- make recommendations for evidence based service models for local delivery that provides equitable access to services at expert level across Wales.
- develop and agree national quality standards for breastfeeding support at informed, skilled and expert level.

Local action

- review levels of staff knowledge and skills at each level of the national skills framework (once developed).
- ensure the knowledge and skills framework informs local job descriptions and person specifications for relevant staff.
- undertake a review of local breastfeeding support service model against identified needs
- develop and describe a local breastfeeding support model, based on the best available evidence that provides equitable access to informed, skilled and expert services
- ensure that there is a system in place for the consideration of developments in national guidance or the evidence base and its application to local services.

Action 7

A review of current education standards relating to breast and infant feeding in line with NMC review of Nursing and Midwifery standards to ensure that breast feeding is a core component of midwifery, neonatal, Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (SCPHN) and paediatric training

National action

- to develop a skilled and competent NHS Wales workforce throughout primary and secondary care services.
- to ensure commissioning of education both pre and post registration which adopt NMC core competencies in relation to breastfeeding support, skills and knowledge
- services will adopt and develop evidence based standards

Local action

- each Health Board will create and sustain a trained workforce within an environment that supports breast and infant feeding
- health boards will provide trained staff across the health care system on breast and infant feeding at 3 main levels
 - a) informed
 - b) skilled
 - c) expert
- academic institutions across Wales to standardise educational learning outcomes relating to breast and infant feeding
- develop academic standards to ensure consistency and quality of the learning outcomes relating to breast and infant feeding

Evidence base

NMC standards

Action 8

A quality assurance model is required to set and monitor standards. An options appraisal was led by Public Health Wales with key stakeholders and the following recommended preferred option agreed

- Option 2 – “Once for Wales” model contract across maternity, neonatal, HV and education with a three year inbuilt evaluation of outcomes. BFI has been asked to cost this model.

National action

- the preferred option is to be modelled and costed by Welsh Government in collaboration with Public Health Wales and key stakeholders
- advice is to be given following the development of a future assurance model to the Minister for Health and Social Services
- on agreement of the future model the strategic leadership group will provide oversight to the development, implementation and monitoring of the assurance model

Local action

- health boards will work in partnership with the strategic leadership group to clarify roles and responsibilities of healthcare professionals supporting quality assurance model detailing professional accountability
- health boards will provide breastfeeding outcome data for surveillance to monitor trends in Local Health Board areas
- health boards will participate in utilising breastfeeding outcome data to inform quality improvement at health board and individual practitioner level.

Action 9

Appropriate specialist services will need to be in place to support women to breastfeed for as long as they intended to.

National action

All women in Wales should have access to specialist breastfeeding and infant feeding support. Women should be satisfied with care they have received in relation to infant feeding. Care beyond common challenges must be recognised by health care practitioners with agreed and appropriate pathways of care for referral to a specialist service.

For this to be realised, there will be a need for:

- national funded support to coordinate all Wales specialist guidelines eg: Tongue Tie Division, early Neonatal weight loss guidelines
- provision of a national system for Tongue Tie Division services, which include specialist breastfeeding support, referral, expert services and follow up.
- development of high quality evidence based, QA mechanisms, which includes testing of accessibility to specialist breastfeeding services in each Health Board across Wales
- Government and Public Health Wales commitment to adhering to the International Code of Breastmilk Substitutes/ creating legislation preventing unethical promotion of formula milk. All professional bodies in Wales should adhere to these standards.
- Developing and assessing a strategic plan to coordinate a national breastmilk bank, which is easy to access and cost efficient for all NICU/NNU/ maternity services throughout Wales.

Local action

- Specialist breastfeeding/infant feeding support to be developed by each Health Board to meet local needs and to provide effective streamlined care for families referred by any health care professional. This must include support throughout the infant feeding journey.
- To ensure that practitioners are aware of their limitations when breastfeeding and infant feeding difficulties are beyond common challenges and beyond their clinical expertise.

Action 10

Develop and implement an approach to communication on breastfeeding that is co-created, consistent and evidence-based to bring about social change and normalise breastfeeding in Wales.

National action

- Public Health Wales will lead a synthesis of the current available evidence based for the benefits of breastfeeding in high income countries and translate these into accessible evidence statements for system wide use
- The Wales Parent Information Project will ensure that parent information supports the goals of the Breastfeeding Strategic Action Plan in replacing Bump Baby and Beyond
- Public Health Wales will work with stakeholders to ensure that the best practice guidelines are followed to co-produce information on breastfeeding in Wales
- Public Health Wales will ensure that evidence based information to support breastfeeding is available through the Every Child Wales website
- Public Health Wales, Welsh Government, Health Boards and the third sector will work collectively to ensure that consistent, evidence based, accessible and bilingual information is available to support breastfeeding.
- Public Health Wales will review the evidence for effective action to promote breastfeeding initiation using best practice methods in behaviour change and social marketing and make recommendations for action as part of its 10 Steps to a Healthy Weight Programme.
- Welsh Government and Public Health Wales will consider the need for improved guidance and monitoring on the WHO International Code on the Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes in Wales.

Local action

- Health Boards will work with the All Wales Parent Information Project to reduce duplication and increase consistent communication on breastfeeding
- Health Boards will work with local partners to disseminate clear, evidence based and consistent information on breastfeeding in local communities
- Health Boards will ensure that all breastfeeding parents are signposted to independent, evidence based, quality assured advice and information on breastfeeding
- Health Boards through their local strategic partnerships will work to ensure that any public facing mass communication or marketing activity is informed by best practice behavioural science and social marketing practice and takes account of the opportunity to complement national level action where appropriate
- Health Boards will ensure they have effective mechanisms in place to monitor compliance with the International Code on the Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes.

Evidence base

WHO International Code of the Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes 1981

<https://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/infantfeeding/9241541601/en/>

Public Health Wales – Behavioural Analysis of Breastfeeding (2019)

Action 11

Work to reduce inequalities in breastfeeding in Wales through improved monitoring, reporting and action to influence social norms

National action

- Public Health Wales will develop an action plan to promote normalisation of breastfeeding based on the currently available behavioural analysis
- Public Health Wales will work with academic partners to commission and develop research to inform action on reducing inequalities in breastfeeding rates in Wales
- The Strategic Group will oversee work to develop guidance on the role of peer influence, peer support and peer networks in promoting uptake and continuation of breastfeeding
- Welsh Government and Public Health Wales will ensure that appropriate recognition of creating new social norms for breastfeeding is reflected in national settings based programmes of work e.g. Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes; Healthy Working Wales

Local action

- Local Public Health Teams will ensure that local strategic partnerships understand the patterns of breastfeeding inequalities in their local communities
- Regional Partnership Boards, Public Services Boards and other strategic partnerships relevant to the Early Years should review action to improve breastfeeding rates as part of ongoing assessment of need with a clear focus on inequalities and ensure evidence based action is included in local plans
- Health Boards should review inequalities in breastfeeding rates at each measurement point and work to reduce variation.

Evidence base

Maternity Data Indicators Wales

<http://www.nwisinformationstandards.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/299/20160629-DSCN%202016%2002-Maternity%20Indicators%20Data%20Set-Final%20v1.1.pdf>

Public Health Outcomes Framework <https://public.tableau.com/views/PHOF2017LAHB-HOME/LAHB?:embed=y&:showVizHome=no>

Improving intention to breastfeed in low-breastfeeding-rate Welsh communities

Asset Base Approaches to Breastfeeding

Action 12

Ensure that research, evaluation and evidence informs action to improve breastfeeding rates in Wales

National action

- Public Health Wales to establish a Research Development Group to stimulate research into breastfeeding priority areas in Wales
- Public Health Wales working with stakeholders to identify opportunities for promoting knowledge transfer and mobilisation to ensure action is informed by the best available international evidence
- Strategic Group to develop and agree a logic model and evaluation framework

Local action

- Health Boards to ensure that action to promote breastfeeding is based on the best available evidence of what works
- Health Boards to ensure that all action is appropriately monitored and evaluated and that learning is shared with partners and the wider system

Action 13

Implementation of action to promote breastfeeding uses best practice in delivering change at scale including quality improvement methods

National action

- Public Health Wales, 1000 Lives quality improvement consider opportunities for a national improvement programme to increase breastfeeding at 10 days and beyond.
- Public Health Wales develops guidance and provides training on large scale change approaches to population health improvement

Local action

- Health Boards support Midwives and Health Visitors in undertaking training in quality improvement methods e.g. IQT Silver
- Health Boards participate in nationally led quality improvement initiatives
- Health Boards support practitioners in undertaking local quality improvement projects