

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL - REPORT TO MEMBERS

Meeting:	Health Select Commission
Date:	8th December 2011
Title:	Breastfeeding Scrutiny Report
Directorate:	Public Health

1. Summary

To highlight to the Health Select Commission the progress on the breastfeeding agenda and raise where there is the opportunities for further improvements.

2. Recommendations

That the Health Select Commission:

- **Recognise breastfeeding as a continued priority area for action**
- **Consider where support could be made available to aid continued progress and the achievement of UNICEF Stage 2 in the Spring 2012.**
- **Receive an annual update on the progress from Health Leads**



3. Background

A comprehensive scrutiny review was completed in 2010 exploring the progress made on the breastfeeding agenda, identifying a series of recommendations. These recommendations included;

- Improving the promotion of breastfeeding across Rotherham
- Increasing the number of breastfeeding friendly public places, and
- Increasing the mother to mother support across Rotherham

Since 2010, there has been significant progress made on the breastfeeding agenda with breastfeeding rates on the increase.

Initiation rates:

	2010/11Q2	2010/11 Q3	2010/11 Q4	2011/12 Q1	2011/12 Q2
Actual	59.5	62	63.2	65.2	60.92

6-8 week rates:

	2010/11Q2	2010/11 Q3	2010/11 Q4	2011/12 Q1
Actual	26.6	30.2	31.1	31.6

The main objective for Rotherham is to maintain and improve on these rates, by providing comprehensive support for mothers and creating welcoming breastfeeding environments across Rotherham.

The progress made towards UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative Stage 2 accreditation in the hospital and community has ensured that staff are trained and mothers are being provided with comprehensive breastfeeding information throughout pregnancy. There are still opportunities to improve the support and advice by providing further activity and support across Rotherham. This support is being explored using new technologies e.g. facebook and askmycommunity. There is also a need to have a coordinated approach to the Breastfeeding Friendly premises.

The main achievements made have included;

- Peer support is provided in the hospital and within the community. 19/22 children's centres have an active peer support group meeting on a weekly basis.
- All children's centres, all libraries and some pharmacies are breastfeeding friendly, a range of other venues are available across the town centre, including Costa and Mothercare.
- Maternal Health Workers provide pregnant women and new mothers with additional support to ensure that breastfeeding is well established, resulting in more new mothers starting and continuing to breastfeed for at least 6 weeks.
- Ask my community have a breast buddies page which promotes the benefits of breastfeeding and provides mothers with a forum to ask questions and communicate throughout the week. <http://www.askmycommunity.com/rotherham-breast-buddies>

There is further support required to ensure that women in Rotherham continue to receive support in a timely manner. It would be great for Rotherham to encourage all Town Centre venues or Parkgate Retail Park to become breastfeeding friendly to improve the positive perceptions of breastfeeding across the Borough, demonstrating that Rotherham welcomes breastfeeding.

8. Finance

Significant funding from local and national funding streams has been targeted towards increasing the breastfeeding rate and evaluating the success of services and campaigns. From 2012 onwards, funding will be reduced to only key services. Local providers of midwifery and health visiting services will need to prioritise breastfeeding to maintain the improvements made over recent years.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Risk	Mitigation
1. Lack of progress against UNICEF BFI agenda	Regular audits completed by infant feeding team to review progress. Action plans in place to ensure that all managers and service leads understand outstanding actions.
2. Current levels of support reduced when funding ceases	Discussions between service leads is underway to ensure breastfeeding care pathway continues once funding ends
3. Breastfeeding women not aware of where they can receive breastfeeding support	All breastfeeding women provided with the same information from all breastfeeding support services. This information is also on the askmycommunity website and other local websites.
4. Not all venues want to be breastfeeding friendly, impacting on the perception of how welcoming Rotherham libraries shops, cafes and restaurants are.	Breastfeeding friendly needs to be an inspirational activity that is linked to all strategic developments, to normalise breastfeeding across Rotherham.
5. Employers unsupportive of women returning to work and continuing to breastfeed.	Utilise the support from the Chamber to ensure that all employers understand the rights of mothers and equally the benefits to employees and infant's health from being breastfed and consequently reduced sick leave rates. Use the equality act breastfeeding clauses to help drive change and improvements.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

If we successfully address breastfeeding it will support activity to tackle health inequalities in Rotherham. It will have a positive impact on reducing NHS spending through improved health and reduced ill health of mothers and babies, conversely a failure to address this will have a negative impact.

11. Contacts

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