

Sample Parents Guide to Breastfeeding Policy

Aim

We support the right of all parents to make informed decisions about infant feeding. All our staff and volunteers will support you in your decisions. We believe that breastfeeding is the healthiest way to feed your baby and we recognise the important benefits that breastfeeding provides for both you and your child. We therefore encourage you to breastfeed your baby. We protect breastfeeding by allowing no advertising of artificial baby milk to mothers and their families. We do not distribute artificial baby milk or other feeding supplies within our health service.

Ways in which we will help mothers to breastfeed successfully:

- Our health care practitioners have been specially trained to help you to breastfeed your baby.
- During your pregnancy your Lead Maternity Carer will discuss breastfeeding with you and will tell you about the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding to six months and answer any questions you may have.
- We have information available for you about the WHO/UNICEF *The Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding*.
- We will ensure that a knowledgeable and skilled health practitioner will be available to advise you about breastfeeding when you are at home and to help you to understand your baby's issues.
- We will assist you to meet any breastfeeding challenges and give you information on who you can contact at anytime, day or night, if you require feeding advice.
- We encourage you to give frequent, unrestricted feedings whenever your baby signals hunger.
- We recommend that you keep your baby near you whenever you can so that you get to know each other.
- We will give you information about safe sleeping practices.
- We recommend that you do not use bottles, teats, dummies or nipple shields while your baby is learning to breastfeed. They can make it more difficult for your baby to learn to breastfeed and for you to establish a good milk supply.
- We will show you how to express your breastmilk by hand and will give you written information about this and how to store it safely.
- We will support you to exclusively breastfeed your baby until he/she is about six months old. Most babies need only breastmilk so if you are told that your baby needs any other food or drink before this time you must be given a full explanation and you will have the opportunity to discuss/question this.

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- We will help you recognise when your baby is ready for other foods, usually at about six months of age. We will discuss with you, appropriate foods and how they can be introduced.
- We welcome breastfeeding in our service. If you would prefer somewhere private to breastfeed, please ask a member of staff.
- We will provide contact details of mother-to-mother support groups and other services in the community which also offer understanding and support with breastfeeding.
- Our services full Breastfeeding Policy is available for you to read on request.

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